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DENOMINATIONAL DANGERS.

THE new movement for the organization of Liberal Christianity is opposed on two sides, and the opposition is grounded on the same objection. It is not a movement for progress, but for the *arrest* of progress. It is practically saying, "We have attained to all the truth we ever shall: now let us box it up, and keep it on hand to be dealt out to the world. Unitarianism, as we now have it and formulate it, is a finality; and we may expect no new discoveries." It is to seize free thought in its fusion, and fossilize it.

There is reason for these apprehensions and notes of alarm. The only question is, Where is the danger most imminent? Disorganization is simply the first stage of disintegration, dissolution, and death; organization *may be* a process of life, growth, enlargement, and fresh blossoming and fruitage, not of arrest and fossilization; and the conditions on which we organize will determine which of these two results we are making for.

There are two parties of movement: which is backward and which is forward? One rejects Christianity as a supernatural revelation, and posits itself exclusively upon the discoveries of science and the natural intuitions of the soul. It discredits the gospel records; regards the Christ as unhistoric, — a normal development of our sinful hu-

manity, and belonging to a period of legend and fable. Christianity is one of the past religions, partial and provisional, not universal; and the church is antiquated, and not an institution of to-day. The universal and absolute religion is to leave these behind, and is to be a fresh development of advancing humanity.

The other party of movement posits itself strictly within the provisions of Christianity and within the Church, believing that the auspicious results of modern criticism give fresh authentication to the gospel records, and bring out the Christ with more sunbright clearness and reality. They believe that Christianity was not humanly discovered, but divinely given, and that the Holy Spirit, ever immanent in our advancing humanity, will reveal the Christ more freshly and perfectly to the soul; that the Church may change its form and dress according to times and places, but that its interior substance changes not, except to break with more open splendor through the human errors that had obscured and hindered it. This party of movement is the one in which we have most entire sympathy; and, if we thought the new organization was an arrest of progress, and doomed us to stop with our present attainments, we would oppose it in every possible way, or else abandon it.

Which of these two parties is the legitimate inheritor of the ideas of those who inaugurated what we call Liberal Christianity fifty years ago, — Kirkland, Bancroft, Buckminster, Channing, and the Wares? It needs but a cursory reference to their writings to answer this question. These men had their conceptions of Christian doctrine; but, consciously and professedly, these conceptions were imperfect and inadequate, and they had visions of a glorious future when Christianity would be, not superseded, but better understood, and its infinite wealth more fully realized to the churches.

There is a strange misapprehension, and a perpetual iteration of misstatement, as to the issue which Unitarianism made with Orthodoxy in its early day. It was not a question of creed or no creed. A creed — *credenda*, something to be believed — they never thought to repudiate and undervalue.

They knew well enough what a sorry figure any church would make which had no article of faith to offer. What they protested against was *human* creeds; and they protested with the more vehemence and eloquence, because, as they contended, we have a *Divine creed* all sufficient for the churches, and which the human creeds only darken and pervert. They rejected human authority and fallible teachers and masters, because, they said, we have a Divine Master, even Christ, and we will have no one come between us and him. Christian truth, they said, is infinite, and the Sacred Scriptures are its inexhaustible treasury; Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, and no sect can monopolize or comprehend him. It was because they emphasized these divine articles of faith, and adhered to them lovingly and supremely, that they denounced human creeds as hindrances in the way of progress. These are the words of Channing:—

“My first objection to them (creeds) is, that they separate us from Jesus Christ. To whom am I to go for my knowledge of the Christian religion, but to the Great Teacher, to the Son of God, to him in whom the fulness of the Divinity dwelt? This is my great privilege as a Christian, that I may sit at the feet, not of a human but Divine Master; that I may repair to him in whom truth lived and spoke without a mixture of error,—who was eminently the Wisdom of God and the light of the world. And shall man dare to interpose between me and my heavenly guide and Saviour, and prescribe to me the articles of my Christian faith? What is the state of mind in which I shall best learn the truth? It is that in which I forsake all other teachers for Christ, in which my mind is brought nearest to him; it is that in which I lay myself open most entirely to the impressions of his mind. Let me go to Jesus with a human voice sounding in my ears, and telling me what I must hear from the Great Teacher, and how can I listen to him with singleness of heart? All Protestant sects, indeed, tell the learner to listen to Jesus Christ; but most of them shout around him their own articles so vehemently and imperiously that the voice of the heavenly Master is well nigh drowned. He is told to listen to Christ;

but told that he will be damned, if he receives any lessons but such as are taught in the creed. He is told that Christ's word alone is infallible; but, unless it is received as interpreted by fallible men, he will be excluded from the communion of Christians. This is what shocks me in the creed-maker. He interposes himself between me and my Saviour. He does not trust me alone with Jesus. He does not leave me to the word of God. This I cannot endure. The nearest possible communication with the mind of Christ is my great privilege as a Christian. I must learn Christ's truth from Christ himself as he speaks in the records of his life, and in the men whom he trained up, and supernaturally prepared to be his witnesses to the world.

"I cannot but look upon human creeds with feelings approaching contempt. When I bring them into contrast with the New Testament, into what insignificance do they sink! What are they? Skeletons, freezing abstractions, metaphysical expressions of unintelligible dogmas; and these I am to regard as the expositions of the fresh, living, infinite truth which came from Jesus! I might with equal propriety be required to hear and receive the lisplings of infancy as the expressions of wisdom. Creeds are to the Scriptures what rush-lights are to the sun. The creed-maker defines Jesus in half-a-dozen lines, perhaps in metaphysical terms, and calls upon me to assent to this account of my Saviour. I learn less of Christ by this process than I should learn of the sun by being told that this glorious luminary is a circle about a foot in diameter. There is but one way of knowing Christ. We must place ourselves near him, see him, hear him, follow him from his cross to the heavens, sympathize with him and obey him; and thus catch clear and bright glimpses of his divine glory."*

Henry Ware the younger emphasizes the same statement with great variety of phrase and illustration. Here is a specimen:—

"Christ is the foundation, because the Christian religion

* Works, vol. ii. pp. 191-2.

rests on his authority. He is the prime and only sufficient teacher. The religion is to be learned from him, and to his word the final appeal must be made. No representations of what it is, or of what it teaches, are to be trusted, except so far as they are perceived to be conformable to his own; as uttered in his life, and recorded by his evangelists, or illustrated by his apostles. The wisdom of man is an uncertain and insufficient guide. For Christianity is not something to be discovered by us, but is a revelation from heaven sent for our acceptance, concerning which we have nothing to do but to study and receive it. It affords no scope for invention or discovery. We may not add to it nor take from it. We may speculate concerning it, but may not fix our speculations as a part of it. And, if we receive the alterations and additions which are found in the traditions of the Church or the books of its teachers, we may be sure that we receive error. For the greatest corruption in doctrine and morals prevailed when the teachers had hidden the Bible, and set up tradition and authority in its stead; when they placed themselves in the seat of Jesus, and men obeyed them instead of him. In this way the true light, which ought always to have been like a city set on a hill, was hidden, as it were, under a bushel; and an almost pagan darkness overshadowed the world,—a darkness that was felt, which was scattered only by uncovering the light of God's holy word, and restoring the forgotten ascendancy of Jesus Christ."*

Such was the high vantage-ground of Liberal Christianity, and such was the issue which it made with Orthodoxy. The men who inaugurated it in opposition to New-England Calvinism all speak in the same lofty strain; and they would condemn the doctrine of no creed or no articles of faith with an eloquence as indignant and emphatic as they would condemn the substitution of human articles and interpretations for the prime article of Protestantism,—Christ the only Master, and his word the only rule of faith and practice. They shrink as much from presenting their own conceptions of

* Discourse on the Offices and Character of Christ, pp. 11, 12.

Christianity for Christianity itself in its full-orbed perfection and brightness as they would the conclusions of anybody else; believing in its internal, divine power to quicken the human faculties, and exalt them as they have never yet been, and achieve for itself a future of unimaginable glory. Hence Dr. Channing, in his letter to James Martineau, protests against a Unitarian Orthodoxy, against coming to a stand-still; since Unitarianism, though an improvement upon former systems, does not yet "work deeply," and "strike living springs in the soul," and "must undergo important modifications and developments." But these modifications and developments were not to be outside of Christianity, but within it; not by breaking away from the Christ, but by coming nearer to him as the Divine personality, which the human creeds had hindered, in our near and heavenly beholdings.

If the new organization undertakes to recede from this high vantage-ground, and go against the grain of all the best traditions of Unitarianism, it needs no prophet to foretell for it an ignominious failure. If it tries to strike a sort of average between extremes, and organize this as Unitarianism, and exhibit it as the fixed quantity of truth to be given to the world, it will make the sorriest figure in history that ever a sect did. There is not a denomination which cannot exhibit vastly more of organized truth than Unitarians can, if done in this way. And yet we observe, that, in a recent article, written with marked ability, and evidently with the best intent, there is an attempt of this sort. The writer undertakes to strike a sort of balance between Dr. Channing and Theodore Parker, or to put them both in as complements of a whole. Dr. Channing and Theodore Parker, — one makes Christ the foundation, the head of the Church, the sole infallible guide; and says, "Away with human creeds; for they come between me and my Saviour." The other says, "Away with the infallible guide. Christ was fallible and sinful, like us; and the pretended records of him are spurious." It would be interesting to see how these are to complement each other in an average sort of Unitarianism. It would be very much as Yes and No complement each other. If four

plus be added to four *minus*, the sum total, as we reckon it, is zero. The Unitarianism got out in this way, being the precise point where opposite forces balance and neutralize each other, would be the most contemptible of all imbecilities. And yet the same article says, that "there is no place of safety in the Unitarian body for any Christian who is afraid of fellowship with such men as Theodore Parker." If the writer means personal fellowship, friendly appreciation, even to the defence of all personal rights and liberties, no one would respond to the sentiment with a louder amen than Dr. Channing. And it holds good, not alone as regards Theodore Parker, but every honest man and woman alive. But if, on the other hand, he means ecclesiastical fellowship and inclusion, and co-operation for diffusing the religion of Jesus Christ, no one would reject it more vehemently than Channing and Ware; and the denomination that undertakes thus to blow hot and cold, and prophesy Yes and No in the same breath, instead of finding "a place of safety," would not find at the end of two years a comfortable foothold on the face of the earth. This at least is an age that requires moral earnestness, and no denomination will be one of its living forces that undertakes to face two ways at once.

The Conference have begun nobly. They make the prime article of faith, discipleship of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the prime duty of the disciple, self-denial, and the devotion of life and property to the service of God and building up the kingdom of his Son. Herein they are in the strict line of all the glorious traditions of the liberal faith. They repudiate all human creeds for the one Divine creed,—the lordship of Jesus Christ; leaving all other questions about him and his doctrine to individual inquiry and private judgment. What may be his relation to the Infinite Father, what unexhausted meaning may be found in the atonement, inspiration, immortality, eternal life; what are the unsounded depths of human nature; what unexhausted and unformulated truth may be in the Divine revelations,—are questions which Unitarianism cannot close up, without the peril of instant suicide. Liberal Christianity could not change its platform for any thing else, and

remain Christian. It could not make it any narrower, and remain liberal. But by a warmer fellowship of the churches, by more earnest, benevolent action, by a quickened zeal throughout the entire body, by intenser spiritual life and activity, the denomination will rise, if at all, to more living apprehension of Divine truth, to nearer and more vital sympathy with the mind of Christ, to a more experimental knowledge of the teachings of the Holy Spirit, and thence to a broader, more profound, and universal theology. With hearty union on the one comprehensive article of faith, there is full scope for individual freedom and intuition, and all liberty of prophesying, to unfold its inexhaustible riches. In this way, if at all, the Christian communion is to be a church, and not a sect; an organism, and not an amorphous mass of individuals; progressive, and not stationary; broad and catholic, and not partial and narrow; a continuity from the past, not a fragment broken off and lying alone; bearing in its bosom the germs of an auspicious future, and not a stranded hulk upon the shores of time. It is the grand decisive hour of Unitarianism. If it chooses well, and remains both liberal and Christian, it will be in the Church of the future the live stone of the building, elect and precious. If it ceases to be either liberal or Christian, its race, we apprehend, is well nigh run; and the future antiquarian will find it among the half-formed specimens that went to fossil before their time.

8.

THE EIRENICON OF THE AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.*

THE peacemakers are blessed, and they shall be called the children of God; but, in this present time, they do not always win the most applause. The oppositions of science are more stimulating and fascinating than the accords of faith and feeling. Moreover, peace-negotiators have never prospered

* Rev. Dr. J. F. Clarke on "Orthodoxy, its Truths and its Errors."

much in the theological world. One almost fancies sometimes, that the contending parties cannot bear the thought of losing the excitement of the controversy, or — must we say? — quarrel. The higher unity, which is to resolve all sects, and bring us together under one Lord, is long in coming or returning. Nevertheless, we cling to the hope that the better day will dawn; and, believing that the contradictions of Scripture are only in appearance and can be harmonized, we trust that the same will be the result with the antagonisms which are based upon these seeming opposites. Spite of all discouragements, we return bravely to the study of conflicting dogmatics; and try, at least, to please ourselves with the fancy, that the things in which Christians agree are more than those about which they differ.

Dr. Clarke's book is an excellent specimen of eirenic theology. It will, at the lowest estimate, be of great service to all who desire to explore the ground which has been so long and is still a battle-field. It is quite worth while for those who are not much versed in such matters themselves, to learn from a competent scholar what Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy really are; and in Dr. Clarke's hands the subject gains all the felicity of treatment which proceeds from a genuine catholicity of spirit. The author is Unitarian, more Unitarian than he knows, more Unitarian than he is willing to confess to himself; and, as we judge, he confounds his kind side for Orthodoxy with a reception of its teachings: nevertheless, he has this kind side, and his religious views are profoundly serious, and held as from Christ in trustful discipleship.

Two classes of persons will find no pleasure in the book. It will be altogether without significance for our Naturalists in religion. They have parted company, as they think for ever, with the Orthodoxy and the Heterodoxy that appeal to a book-revelation. They believe that the one and the other are behind the age, — the one only a very little less antiquated than the other. They care little to see again for the thousandth time how the texts can be marshalled this way and that, and made to face about at will. If they deign to say any thing about it, they will tell you, most likely, that the Unitarian

is pretty sure to get the worst of it in controversy with the Orthodox, so long as he insists upon his antiquated and superstitious reverence for the Holy Scriptures; and that we shall never get to the end of our strifes until we have done with these appeals to ancient words, and discuss the subjects in dispute upon their own merits. They will tell you, that the only interesting and really representative parties are that of the Romanists, who never yield a jot, and that of the Rationalists, who yield every thing. Different views about the resurrection and ascension of Christ will not much engage the attention of those who have ceased altogether to believe in that resurrection and ascension. To the Naturalist, all the matters which Dr. Clarke handles so earnestly and so ably are at least obsolescent: at the best, they are interesting only as human thoughts upon the highest themes. When a man has satisfied himself, that the Gospel according to St. John was composed by some harmless person or persons in the middle of the second century, he can take only a literary or philosophic interest in the attempt to harmonize what the Unitarian and the Trinitarian have derived from the poem. The self-styled friends of progress will warn the fossil, that he must not pretend to be alive; that he died, and became a fossil, a long time ago; and that any attempt at resuscitation, in these last days, will be a signal and deplorable failure. They are disposed, for the most part, to say to Unitarianism, that, if it insists upon being scriptural, it must cease to be Unitarian and become Orthodox, and that is their *reductio ad absurdum*; for who, save a fool, say our wise men, can possibly lapse into the old dogmatisms?

Unsatisfactory and unedifying to another and a very large class of religionists, the book will be, as a rash attempt to reconstruct foundations; and to separate true from false, where all is true and equally valuable. Truths and errors in Orthodoxy! they will say; why, there are no errors: who is this that undertakes to sit in judgment upon the faith of Christian ages, — the inheritance of the theologians, if not of the saints? We can easily imagine the supreme indifference with which the Roman-Catholic scholar would treat this little flurry

amongst the sects, deigning perhaps to refer to it as an illustration of the hopelessness of any effort to attain to religious science outside of the Romish communion. The Literalists, who emphasize the Scripture as the Romanist does the Church, will be equally out of all sympathy with the enterprise. It will have for them also a very vague and all-out-of-doors look. As Protestants, they are hardly entitled to any such supreme dogmatism; and yet they are as confident in their dogmatics as any Romanist, and see no necessity whatever for all this reconstructing of religious symbols and institutions. Calvinism, for example, they may tell you, is a very well known thing, and it hangs together part to part; and, if you choose to retain any of it, you must have the whole. Such religionists are likely to be well versed in their own systems; and they will not, in all probability, find it hard to discover flaws in the exhibition of these systems by any one who stands without, however well-instructed and conscientious he may be. They may be glad that a Unitarian is beginning to open his eyes, and find something good in opinions which his fellow-heretics have been in the habit of denouncing; and they will entreat him to open his eyes wider. They will say, The fold is open for all who would return; and, as you have got back so far, you might as well finish the journey. "Concessions of Unitarianism to Orthodoxy" will be their title for the treatise; and they will find in it another token of the disintegration and the discords of Liberalism in theology.

Possibly some of the more pronounced and dogmatic Unitarians may, in their way and from their position, share this feeling. There are still some to whom the Unitarian scheme of doctrine is a very well defined matter. They are content with it, and hope to prevail by it. Dr. Clarke will be for such minds an author of confusion. His "Truths in Orthodoxy" they will not see. His "Errors" they always have seen, and made the most of. Much that he says they will not understand, and much that they will understand they will not like. If it were not Dr. Clarke, they would have some-

thing to say about coquetting with Orthodoxy, and trying to keep alive phrases which have lost their meaning.

Nevertheless, there will be not a few who will be greatly helped, in these confused times, by these words of peace, which are also words of knowledge and of wisdom. The book is a genuinely Protestant book, and it has a right to exist in Protestant quarters; because Protestant dogmatics are not so settled that the individual may not undertake, for what he holds to be a sufficient cause, to unsettle them. These are open questions for us, which Dr. Clarke moves and handles; and, spite of what our radicals may say, there are many who feel a deep interest in such discussions. Indeed, the radical may find, that a proper treatment of the matters which he has most at heart can be reached only after much preliminary labor upon the points which are still at issue between Unitarians and Trinitarians.

Dr. Clarke's book, we repeat, seems to us to have value chiefly for the aid which it supplies to the explorer. His results do not commend themselves as finalities. Why should they? Or how should he look for any thing of the sort? It is much, if what he has done shall promote, as it will, mutual respect and a better mutual understanding, and put us into a temper and condition to carry forward inquiries that have been so well begun. We cannot suppose, for example, that any Trinitarian will be ready to accept Dr. Clarke's Trinitarianism as adequate. Spite of all appearances to the contrary, it is Unitarianism, and not Trinitarianism at all. The two doctrines are as wide apart as ever. Nevertheless, Unitarianism, as expounded by Dr. Clarke, will not be the positively painful and offensive thing which, as sometimes presented, it must be to the sincere Trinitarian. Every earnest Christian must be charmed and edified by the serious temper of the writer; his dealing with sin; his faithful exhibition of the way of deliverance in Christ and his gospel; the entire absence of all "smooth preaching" and light handling of the solemn mystery of our life.

E.

A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

SAVIOUR of human kind!
We worship in thy love,
Thy holy love, in infant form enshrined.
Why wert thou from above
Of mortal woman born,
Knowing that thou shouldst meet a dark world's scorn?

It was that thou wert love,
We loveless, that thy feet
Earth's roughest paths, weary and bleeding, pressed;
And thy long-suffering Dove
Is seeking in our breast
A secret chamber of abiding rest.

Enter, All-patient One!
Who in thy breast hast borne
The anguish of a world. The cross of shame
That bore thee fainting down,
And sorrow's thorny crown,
Have gathered brightness from thy radiant name.

The cup of agony
Passed not away, for lo!
One loving bosom bore the mingled flow
Of infant tears and blood;
Emblem of coming woe
'Midst olive shades, and on high Calvary's brow!

Thou who didst bear all this,
That thou mightst sin remove,
Give thy own birth within our spirits now!
Teach us thy mighty love,
While at thy feet we bow,
That we may seek and save the lost, as thou!

Only as little ones,
Saviour, may we be thine!
Enfold us in the bosom of thy love
With arms of truth divine,
Girdle our souls with power,
That we may bear with thee life's darkest hour!

Saviour! what shall we bring?—
 A pleasant offering?
 In temples made with hands thou dost not dwell;
 But with the pure in heart,
 Who see thee as thou art,
 Imparting deeper joy than tongue can tell.
 We bring repentant love
 (From thy own bosom born),
 With childlike faith, and hope that anchor prove.
 Thy sacrificial cross
 Deep on our hearts is worn:
 Thy passion's emblems church and home adorn. M. O. J.

RELIGIOUS LIBERALISM, AND THE UNITARIAN CONFERENCE.

BY GEORGE E. ELLIS.

ONE of the most striking tokens of the energy of truth and power in the Christian religion has been illustrated, in a long course of ages, in the restlessness of thought and the activity of zeal which it excites, periodically and steadily. We often speak of a "reformed Christianity," and of a "reform in the Church." But Christianity and the Christian Church are unchangeable matters. There is no such thing as altering or modifying them. What we reform and change, and reconsider and improve, is, not the Gospel, not the Church, but our own idea or opinion or doctrinal interpretation or method of administration of the Gospel or the Church. Our reforms are within ourselves, in our creeds and measures as professed Christians. So all the marked stages and crises of society in Christendom find multitudes of the most earnest persons in mind and heart, engaged in efforts to get a better mastery of the truth and power contained in the Christian religion. If the Gospel and the Church do not accomplish the Divine work expected of them, we reconsider our opinions, and rally our efforts as Christians.

Nearly every branch and sectarian fellowship of the Christian Church, between and inclusive of the Romanists and the Swedenborgians, has held, within the year now closing, some

organic representation of its membership, its characteristic ideas, and its prospective aims. Under the name of council, convocation, assembly, convention, association, or conference, mostly by formal delegation rather than by free, popular concourse, the different Christian brotherhoods have met for debate, or for practical ends of zeal and benevolence. It would be easy to trace, in the spirit and measures of all these representative gatherings, the evident strengthening of the sentiments of true piety, Christian liberality, and a comprehensive humanity. Viewed in a large and generous way the whole aspect of Christendom is brightened by the results.

The Unitarian brotherhood also has had its Conference. For the first time it has summoned a delegation, lay and clerical, asked, if not authorized, to represent the churches and religious societies in all the matters which might come before the Conference; and requested, on their return, to obtain the indorsement or approval of such churches and societies of the doings and results of the Conference.

A passing word now as to the stir and state of some of the great organized bodies of our common Christendom. The old Roman Church, which is winning much young love, as old people sometimes do, simply because it is in its dotage, has, through its Pope and chief College, pronounced its solemn ban upon the science, the restless thought, and the feverish activity of our age, as hostile to faith and godless,—therefore fatal to society, happiness, and virtue, if not withstood. That Church, paralyzed, as we say, at the centre of its life, shows great vitality at its extremities of organization. It has just held its great Council of prelates and ecclesiastics in our country, with Latin forms, scenic shows, and street processions, the pomp of its dresses, symbols, and altar-rites. That Church is alive to its opportunities, and is master still for the consciences and affections of millions. It deserves high success for its zeal and devotion. Its wonderful organization and its facile adaptations; its charms of display and ritual; its repose and quiet; its mastery of art and music; its assumption for its disciples of all the perplexities of thinking, creed-making, and legislating for conscience,—make for

it a large, a strong, and a silky net in the great fishery for men and women.

The Church of England, in England and its colonies, lives, and holds and changes and interprets its formulas of faith, by the will of the English Parliament. Its endowments and privileges of prerogative, appropriated from Romanism, sustain it as an organization. It now comprehends and tolerates prelates, ministers, and members, who hold the creeds of all the sects, and who claim the freedom of opinion expressed in nearly every form of modern speculation and philosophy. Its most scholarly prelate, the unflinching master of his liberal position, and, what is more and better, the master of his own temper,—for his gentleness and sweetness of spirit under passionate obloquy have never failed him,—keeps at bay ten thousand clerical subscribers against him as a heretic. And where shall we find a heretic, if he be not a heretic? He protests against “prayer to Christ,” and handles the Scriptures with a boldness of criticism which is equally approved by sound learning, and damaging to the assumptions of doctrinal Orthodoxy. Yet convocation and the highest ecclesiastical courts of the realm cannot silence and will not unfrock him. The two foremost deans of that Church, Stanley and Milman,—the former probably destined, if he lives, to be the Primate of all England,—represent the very finest phase of liberality of opinion and true Christian devoutness of spirit. A formal parliamentary decree of unlimited comprehension and freedom within that “Established Church,” or a chaotic ruin, make the alternative before it.

The child of that Church, the Episcopal sect here, is, we believe, destined to large success and great popularity in this country. Unlike its parent in England, with no claims for distinction in learning and scholarship,—for it is behind most of our sects in those attainments,—and with very few distinguished pulpit orators, it is, as a body, earnest, faithful, and zealous. Its ritual and discipline and dispensation are very attractive to many. Its whole spirit is devotional. It does not agitate either in morals or in politics. It does not

concern itself with the radical speculations and excitements of the time. It works almost as by mechanism. Its book-offices engage attention, and serve as a very effective help in the religious education of the young; and its altar-rites of prayer and music compensate to many for the meagreness of its pulpit utterances. It makes itself very free and tolerant within its own fold, though absurdly arrogant and exclusive outside of it. Though its ministers are compelled to avow its creeds and articles, its laity may be full members, and may partake of its ordinances, without professing or believing them. Piety, grace, and virtue may find a fostering and an attractive home within that fold.

It seems to be the policy of that Church to proselyte from the unstable and the unsatisfied in other communions, rather than to draw fresh disciples from the open world. It labors much to win young girls; attaching them rather by their emotional religious affections than by intelligent convictions based on Christian knowledge, and binding them by strong ritualistic methods and associations, with the sagacious expectation that they will win their suitors and future husbands at least to a conformity with what becomes so dear to them. That ritual Church is, in our belief, as we have said, destined to great success and popularity among us. But then, it must, in time, take its turn in the agitation and discussion which all religious organizations have to encounter. Probably, within a score or two of years, and just when that Church has been most prospered by growth, and is most boastful of its gains, a party of the more intelligent, more earnest, and more restless among its members will lead the way for, and insist upon, very important modifications of its system and ritual; requiring more freedom and variety in its stiff routine and in its wooden, mechanical formalism. The re-adaptation of the creed and services of that Church to the faith and wants of Christendom is an occasion to which we may look forward with interest. We can conceive of that Church being so thoroughly vitalized, modified, renovated, and re-adjusted by the principles of Christian and religious truth, that, with its many attractions and excellences, we ourselves, if appointed to

live a long life, might rejoice to find in its quiet ways of worship a refuge for old age. It would need, however, to be greatly *Re-reformed* to furnish us such a shelter. The contingency of our seeking it would depend, too, upon what, in the meanwhile, may befall our own present fellowship in its ministry and method of dispensation. If Sunday gatherings in halls for secular harangues, from men and women who are preaching their own inspirations, whether in a trance or out of one, — supposing there be an appreciable difference in the conditions, — if that dispensation, without Christian ordinance, reverence, the old solemnities of the sanctuary, and the spiritual presence of the Lord and Master, be before us in the way of our *advance*, we shall be at no loss for a stopping-place, without any intent of going backward.

The great and zealous communion of Methodism is now celebrating its centenary, the completion of a hundred years of its most devoted and successful ministry. That branch of the Church has done, within and around itself, a noble work; and has done it nobly, too. It intends to signalize its full century with splendid liberality, by raising ten millions of dollars in this country for educational, reformatory, and benevolent enterprises under its oversight. It remains to be proved whether the culture, refinement, and scholarship, which that body once dispensed with, but is now heartily fostering, will not impair its former power, which, by pure zeal and fervor, it won and used so effectively among the classes of society that crowded its communion.

And so, in all departments of the Christian Church, there are stir and zeal and activity. The tide of worldliness, of secular enterprise, and of vice; the progress of science and the restlessness of free and bold speculation, — may be regarded either as withstanding, or as only rousing and favoring, as they certainly do make mighty demands upon, the agencies of true and vigorous religion. The Church and the world, though sometimes at truce, must choose between an open and a smothered warfare.

This is, in general, the account to be given of the quickened zeal and the new movements which are engaging our

own Christian fellowship as Unitarians. We are having our part and share, in harmony with our distinctive peculiarities as a sect, in a wide and very earnest revolutionary crisis in Christendom. It is a grand and most interesting epoch for all Christians. Our own field and responsibility in it, occupying as we do an advanced position, are engaging us in new inquiries and new measures.

Besides the sympathetic interest of excitement which we feel in the general stir now moving through all Christendom, in dealing with the truth and substance and working power of our religion, we have a special reason for our own new zeal and activity. The recent convulsions, political and social, which have distracted our country, have roused the minds and consciences of vast multitudes of people. At the same time, philosophy, science, and Bible criticism have stimulated active minds to the freest thinking and inquiry. Masses of young men have been brought together in halls, councils, fields, and camps. The experiences of crowded hospitals, and of great religious and charitable agencies, have been widely related. The effect has been to unchurch, loosen and liberalize the minds of, thousands; to expand narrowness; to excite inquiry; to exalt the common interests of humanity above those of sect, clique, and party; to multiply and extend the vast enterprises of moral influence and benevolence. We have thought it therefore a favorable time for a new religious movement, an awakening, a display of zeal and activity in the interest of the freest and widest view of the Christian religion, which, at the same time, will maintain its Divine verity and power as the Gospel of God for the salvation of humanity. We know that within our small religious brotherhood we have a high measure of intelligent culture, a faith that consists with freedom of thought and reason, and a heart of warm benevolence; intelligence, faith, benevolent zeal, — three great moving and effective forces. There is a deal of sound sagacity and the moderation of wisdom among the older members of our fellowship; and an equal amount of vivacity, impulsiveness, earnestness, and natural conceit, in its younger portion. We wish, from all

these elements, — more thoroughly Christianized, that they may work more powerfully and purely, — to do a service for our generation. We believe that we have something to teach, to impart, and to do, for which hundreds of thousands are waiting and longing. We believe, that, if we could reach the wide community with our ideas, our opinions, our plans, and our organizations, we should find unchurched and unsettled multitudes ready to welcome them. We think we could thus deal effectively with the irreligion, the unbelief, the indifference, the worldliness, found among the nominal adherents of all sects and churches, as well as in the majority of the whole population who stand outside of all communions. Some of us are even ready to say, that, if we could but draw and gather in and engage and interest all who really, in heart, thought, and purpose, belong to us, but do not now know us, we should be to-day the largest fellowship in Christendom. With motives and aims thus indicated, the body known as Unitarians — heretofore a quiet and unobtrusive fellowship, dying, as it was thought, of dignity — has opened a new era.

What are the elements of which our *body* so called, or our denomination, is composed? The answer to this question depends upon how we use the word “denomination” about ourselves. Do we now compose in the community any such defined, including and excluding, fellowship as may secure for us a distinctive name for a doctrinal or practical religious position, as representing a Christian brotherhood? The full question, in its largest compass, and in its only practical point of interest, has now become one substantially between the letter and the spirit, between a traditional name and a modern definition of that name, as a condition for preventing its becoming obsolete. It is for each one of us to choose in this matter, whether he shall be a member of the traditional Unitarian sect, strictly so called, or a Liberal Christian, after the modern usage of the term. It must be understood henceforward, now that terms once used interchangeably are emphasized distinctively, that whoever accepts the title of “Liberal Christian” merges himself in the

wider brotherhood of persons nominally attached to all Christian sects; and of a still larger number of persons, outside of all sects, to whose individual religion Christianity furnishes any element.

It was clearly the expectation of the old style of Unitarians among us, that ministers and lay people of all the other sects, who were known or supposed to be in, or who should come into, substantial sympathy with their doctrinal opinions and spirit, would be steadily drawn to their avowed fellowship. This was a very natural expectation; for it looked only to a continuance and an extension of the same operating influences which had originated Unitarianism, and made the first Unitarians among us. With such re-enforcements from the sects, and an increasing number of disciples drawn to them from the outside world under an advancing liberality and culture, Unitarians confidently thought that they should grow and strengthen on their original, unchanged basis, warranted and authenticated by a fair interpretation of authoritative Scriptures. But Unitarianism did not thus grow and strengthen itself as a sect on its original basis. Out of such materials as the men and women around us offer, with their degree of mental culture and vigor, and the sort of religion which they accept, we did not make large gains. For proselytism, under such circumstances, it was found that there was either a *plus* or a *minus* element in simple Unitarianism which restricted its growth. The Orthodox sects insist that we failed through a fatal deficiency. Some among ourselves now affirm, that we are limited by an over-straightness in our creed and system. Our societies in the great cities of the country stand substantially, amid quadrupled populations, as they did thirty years ago; and many of our country societies have died out. Other sects, becoming themselves more liberal, retained their restless members within their own folds, and concluded to give a large indulgence to their too acute leaders. It soon came about, that the most distinguished, able, and popular preachers in each of those sects were known to be heretical to the formulas of their communions. The reason openly given why

the Unitarians could not establish a church at Hartford, though money and a Gothic edifice and an able and earnest minister were provided, was, that Dr. Bushnell satisfied the liberal people in that city. Then the radicalism and the loose and the bold speculations which were developed among Unitarians, and which many thought to be the natural outgrowth and issue of their system, frightened off many who were before looking towards them, and even alienated some of their own ministers and lay people. Though those with clear heads and strong logic, who understood themselves and felt sure in their position, whose works praise them, and whose memories live in love, were often saddened, they were not disheartened, by what they witnessed. They could have gone back. There were folds ready to receive them, to laud their retractions, and to give them repose, with more facile material for their zeal. But they had been nurtured, and had had their spiritual fibre knit, by a habit of inquiring first about what they were asked to believe; not, Is it attractive, is it effective, nor, even, is it edifying? but simply, "Is it true?" The old-fashioned Unitarians asked that prime question concerning solicitations made to them in both directions, forward and backward, from their position. Some of that old-fashioned school are left. But there is thought to be something exceedingly difficult in defining and sustaining that position for any popular or extended occupancy. We ceased, therefore, to grow as a sect: at the same time we ceased to expect much sympathy from within other sects, or to address ourselves hopefully to them.

Necessity and hope now lead Unitarians to turn to the great, open fields of the free, social world for proselytism, if it may be; but, at any rate, for the exercise of the gift that is in them, and for the discharge of a faithful duty of effort, help, and mercy to their human race. Unitarians turn now to the unsettled, and the unlabelled by creeds; to the non-church-goers, the come-outers, the spiritualists, the reformers, the free-thinkers; to the earnest, the curious, and the bold; to the hostile and the indifferent of every endurable shade and phase of mind and spirit,—as offering material

for gospel work, at least, and haply, for gospel faith. But for this large and noble aim, caught by a new vision of hope and duty, it is found that our old Bible Unitarianism must consent to consider whether it shall not be widened, if not deepened, into "Liberal Christianity," or, in the fuller and more candid form in which the question really presents itself, into "Religious Liberalism."

It being understood that those whose convictions and preferences lead them to keep fast hold of their "Unitarianism," as well defined by the usage of the last half-century, may still avail themselves of the freedom of their Independent Congregationalism and of their individual liberty, in their pulpit exchanges, and in any strictly denominational schemes, may they also enter into a larger fellowship in behalf of religious, social, and humane objects? The matter of liveliest interest and anxiety for the Unitarian denomination at this present juncture comes up in this form: Whether, for some ends of Christian work and brotherly sympathy, the existing Unitarian sect, dispensing with all the limitations which go with that traditional name, and giving up all attempts to organize by a creed or by any formal statement of even a single matter of doctrine, shall, either with or without its old name, embrace the largest brotherhood of liberal believers and earnest workers who seek to be guided by the spirit of Jesus under the Fatherhood of God?

This question has grand proportions, a frank tone, and an urgent persistency in asking and waiting for an answer, on which serious issues for our churches are suspended. The question comes up fairly and naturally. We have met it in the direct line of our own scholarship, speculation, and practical dealing with Christianity. We must accept it intelligently, honestly, generously; in the interests of high truth, and with a view to the noblest ends of practical fidelity. Shall Unitarians as such offer themselves as members of a larger and freer fellowship than they have been in the past, and, dispensing with a doctrinal Christian creed, organize by the spirit of Christianity?

The question has substantially found an answer in the cir-

cumstances which have brought it forward. Some persons have already attained the *status* of ministers in our churches, and many more are considered by themselves and by others fit candidates for that office, who claim the largest speculative freedom in their views of the Christ of the Gospels and of his religion. They insist, that, if they accept what they believe to be the spirit of his life and teachings, and what their own free souls, minds, and consciences ratify to them as true concerning him, they may stand and serve as his faithful ministers, and may deal as they think right with the historic record, as also with all the legendary, traditional, and ecclesiastical accretions about him.

This issue has been rising before what we call our denomination, and claiming a decision, for more than a quarter of a century. It seemed to many in the body, during the earlier of those years, that those who wished so far to change the old traditional sect of Unitarians as to make it include those formerly called, with some vagueness, Deists, and now, with equal vagueness, called Naturalists or Rationalists, might properly set up a new school or sect by themselves. There seemed, in the look of the matter, as much and as good reason for their secession and their new organization as before there had been for Unitarians to form a party distinct from Trinitarians and Calvinists, or the Congregationalists as distinct from Episcopalians and Presbyterians, or even as the Protestants as distinct from the Romanists. It seemed as if much misunderstanding and heated discussion and alienation would have been avoided among us, if those who had adopted views which shocked the old Bible Unitarians had quietly withdrawn from a discordant relation, and organized by themselves. But, if there ever was a time when that secession would have been practical and wise, it has now gone by; and many think that it has taken its occasion with it. It would have been exceedingly difficult, even if in any way possible, for a constituency among us representing Unitarianism, to have originated, perfected, and enforced any act of exclusion; and those to whom it would have applied very frankly affirmed, that, even if it were only to save our own good

name, they were not disposed to anticipate the purpose of such an act. The misunderstandings, provocations, perplexities, and embarrassments which marked one stage of the issue raised among us have mystified our denominational record, and have not as yet been lucidly or candidly detailed by any one who has traversed them historically or in biography.

The modification of opinion among us was so gradual, and is as yet so undefined in its terms and results; we have so many individualities and phases of thinking and believing; and there are so many ways of stating positions which may or may not be intelligible or tenable, — as to defy all testing by a standard of weights and measures, or by any facilities of doctrinal, intellectual, or spiritual chemistry. Then, too, there are with us mediators in thought, in opinion, and in the potent sympathy of the heart. Some among us who differ most widely — extreme conservatives and extreme liberals — still wish to keep together by the attraction of a common spirit and a common aim. Such is actually the relation now between those who compose among themselves, as ministers, churches, and incorporated parishes, the body known as Unitarians. And this well-understood relation between the somewhat heterogeneous elements of the Unitarian body must, of course, be recognized, in defining the relations of fellowship towards those outside of the body who are in full sympathy with its most “liberal” element.

The invitations to the Convention of last year and to the Conference of this year, though volunteered and going forth in the name of the Unitarian denomination, were addressed indiscriminately, of course, to those who hold the traditional Unitarianism, and to those who were well known to have given up its limitations and Scriptural terms, in sympathy only with the fullest religious “Liberalism.” The same circular note, which invited the ministers and churches representing the most conservative form of the denominational creed, reached men and organizations avowedly committed to the largest and loosest form of individualism, with or without the basis of the historical Christian Church. When it is

considered, too, that the ministers and lay delegates thus to be convened were asked to come with credentials authorizing them to vote for those whom they represented, the original composition of the Convention and its organization and its action, being entirely novel among us, would seem to have tasked discretion and good feeling. We may wonder over the substantial harmony and the good work which crowned it. We know not whether any understanding or expectation, or taking for granted, had assured the extreme "Liberals" in the Convention, that the old Unitarian platform should be enlarged proportionately with the terms and the range of the invitations to it. But they might naturally look for, and, if occasion offered, ask for, such enlargement, if only on the rule of courtesy that there must be at a feast seats and dishes for all invited guests and their appetites.

The Conference this year was indeed called under the limitation of a constitutional preamble; and it might be argued, that those whom the preamble displeased or hampered might consider that limitation as annulling the new invitation sent to them. Probably there may have been some who so regarded it, and who, as a consequence, did not comply with the invitation to the Conference. That Conference represented — in a very vague and loose sense, indeed — more than half of the organized churches and societies whom the call to it might be supposed to reach. Not forgetting the noble spirit of work and generosity prompted in the Conference, the matter of most earnest and eloquent debate, manly and frank and generous on both sides, concerned a proposed alteration of the preamble of the Constitution, which, as adopted by the previous Convention, was found to be on the side of old Unitarianism, to the discomfort of the modern Liberalism. Objectors pleaded for a change on the ground, that, in consistency with their consciences and self-respect, they could not call Jesus Christ "Lord and King" in any popularly received sense of those official terms. After full debate, the question was put, Whether, on account of the conscientious scruples of such members of the Conference, the preamble containing those terms should be formally withdrawn, and an-

other preamble, to them preferable, should be substituted. The objectors were voted down by a majority of two-thirds. That, however, cannot be considered as disposing of the issue raised, if the Conference is to aim for the liberal enlargement of embrace which prompted it, unless the scope of the preamble is to be considered as a limitation of the invitations by which it shall henceforward summon members. The terms of the preamble may define the breadth of a Unitarian denominational range ; but they are now pronounced to be a constraint on the freedom of many of its recognized brotherhood. Of course, those who are thought to be fit members to be asked to join a Conference in a religious communion have a right, when they appear, to propose that the basis of the Conference shall satisfy them. If they were members of the body which adopted a basis objectionable to them in some one particular, while all the aims and objects proposed are to them attractive, they may fairly come to an initiatory organization, and seek to revise the basis, while it is yet fresh and experimental. As a matter of fact, too, the basis of a Conference or a Convention is made of what is in the brains and hearts of those who compose it, not in the verbal terms of its formulas. If men and societies are formally invited to a Conference, and have a share in its deliberations and decisions, they may bring the parts of their own platform with them ; and the whole platform is made out of all its parts.

We write the above sentences in an attempt at fairness towards those who occupy a position not our own, and who claim to represent the new religious " Liberalism " developed in the Unitarian fold and outside of it.

Now, on the other hand, it is to be considered, that the Convention and the Conference bore the epithet of " Unitarian," and were summoned to promote such aims and objects as the Christian sentiments represented by Unitarianism might approve. The course of proceedings in the Convention led to the adoption of the preamble containing the terms already referred to. The formula there introduced has been called " a creedlet," — a diminutive creed. So undoubtedly it is,

or something substantially and virtually of that nature. To the old-school Unitarians, it would seem as if it exacted the very minimum of doctrine, and presented the most elastic, and the least chafing, and therefore the most unobjectionable, bond for any thing like an organization of the freest fellowship of Christians. Our Unitarian fathers and mothers would have been incredulous of the prophecy, that their posterity would have ever brought under debate the question, Whether they could, in conscience and self-respect, call Jesus Christ "Lord and Master." If those who class themselves as disciples of Jesus, because they are quickened and guided by his spirit, find themselves able to spiritualize the letter of the record on so many harder test-points, one might marvel that they should halt at some possible construction of the terms "Lord and King" which they could accept. But it so appears, that the conventional significance which those terms bear, indicates, with a peculiar sharpness of definition, the dividing line between the old Unitarian and the new Liberal elements of the Conference. The latter would empty the epithet "Christian" of all its dogmatic contents, that it may be free for spiritual uses. They accept nothing in the body of gospel teaching because it came from the word, or was authenticated by any deed, of the Christ. So far from receiving him as a finality in the province of religious truth, they deny that his teachings derive any additional weight, sanction, or authority from his official character or personality. Whatever is written of him, or is recorded as said or done by him, which is certified to them by the witness within them, they accept loyally and lovingly on the ground of its self-attesting truth, not because of any special sanction from his Messiahship. It follows for them as a matter of course, that, while they avow their discipleship of Christian truth, and seek to be filled and guided by the spirit of Jesus, they may object to lay stress upon his official Lordship or Mastership. They dread the over-committal conveyed by such terms, and affirm that they can better live by the spirit, and do the work, of Jesus, if free in this respect.

The alternative, which is one of exceeding interest to our

honored and cherished fellowship, and of which we may look to reach a decision in the not very distant future, seems to be this: Whether, by the modification of other more vital and stable organizations in the Christian Church and brotherhood, the old Unitarian body will gradually be disintegrated and absorbed among them, as has been or is to be the case with the Society of Friends; or, whether, under what may still be called Unitarianism, such vigor, efficiency, and adaptation of power can be developed, as will assimilate a substantial Christian organism from the mighty but crude mass of "Religious Liberalism." Those who hope for and essay to realize the latter contingency have a noble aim to inspire them; and great will be the glory and the blessing of success.

The substance of the foregoing pages was delivered (Oct. 28) by the writer as a discourse prepared for his own pulpit. In its delivery he said, that, if he had been a member of the Conference, he should have voted with the minority for the modification of the preamble, and for the substitution of some such avowal as this: "That the Conference sought to be united, and guided by the spirit of Jesus, for Christian effort in the promotion and extension of the kingdom of God on the earth." He said he should thus have taken part with the minority, not, as his hearers well knew, from any objection which he had to the terms of the preamble,—for they expressed in his belief the very primer truths of the Christian religion,—but because courtesy to those in the Convention who objected to the preamble, and other constraining reasons, would dictate such a concession. The terms of the preamble are inadequate to the test purpose for which they seem to be adopted. The variance between those who favor and those who oppose them is greater than any accordance in the use of those terms would harmonize; so that any assimilation which they might be expected to effect would be fallacious. The yielding up of the preamble would not imply a repudiation of the belief which the terms avow, on the part of the strictly Unitarian portion of the

Conference, any more than does the omission from the preamble of the Christian doctrine of the Holy Spirit imply their rejection of that prime vitality of the gospel. The concession asked for by the objectors, the writer would have approved, in order to free the Conference — which notoriously was composed of heterogeneous and discordant elements as respects dogmatic belief, however fraternal and earnest in the spirit of a common work — of all constraint for a forced and unavoidably fallacious attempt for a common doctrinal platform. The members did not have in common a creed, nor even a "creedlet;" but they rejoiced in sharing a common spirit, and in recognizing the claims and holy appeals of common duties in a great Christian work. These good works other sects will not invite or allow Unitarians to share with them. May not Unitarians and other Liberals enter into a large fellowship "in the spirit of Jesus" for these works, without any attempt at organization by doctrinal formulas; and thus avert dissension at the very initiation of a noble enterprise?

The writer may add, that he had declined before his Society to go to the Conference as its clerical delegate, because he objected to the official and attested representation of Churches with a power to pledge them, on which it was to be organized; and also to its purpose of an ecclesiastical organization on the basis of faith, from elements known to be discordant. He feared, that, however propitiously and hopefully the scheme might be initiated, it would involve the discussion and the dissension of which we have seen the beginning, but not the end. The writer may be weakly apprehensive or narrow-minded in this view, though he finds himself in sympathy about it with some of the most esteemed and wise among the ministers and lay people of our brotherhood. Is it not better that our radical speculations and variances, for which we have such able and free minds, should be dealt with in our pamphlet and newspaper literature, rather than in our churches and Conferences for Christian work?

PERENNIAL THANKSGIVING.

A SERMON BY REV. OLIVER STEARNS, D.D.

Ps. civ. 33.—“I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have being.”

Who among us feels profoundly enough what an oversight our Father taketh of us? The best illustration which earthly life gives of watchfulness that never tires, of tenderness never exhausted, is afforded in maternal solicitude. Yet this is a faint emblem of God's care for his creatures, of that unfathomable love which opens countless springs of happiness throughout the precincts of his vast dominion; of that sublime forecast which has replenished the universe, as a great storehouse, with provision for the wants of all orders of being. He openeth his hand, and they are filled with good. How grand is this providence! Who can take in the conception of it? The thought of this energy of good, which has gone forth in its immense activities since moments infinitely beyond our utmost stretch of imagination, which has worked hitherto, and which must go forward working without end; of existence which fills the inaccessible heights, the lowest depths, the vergeless universe, with its life-giving presence; of existence which cannot but be, and cannot be but for good,—it is too wonderful for us: it is high, and we cannot attain unto it.

And yet the soul itself, with its power of thought and affection, is a greater gift than all that which excites it, and imprints its pictures on it, from the outward world. The creation, bursting so fair upon our freshened senses with every dawn, is but the hem of the garment of the infinite Majesty. The soul is the child of that Father's Spirit. What is all the array of such a golden summer as that whose fruit autumn has just finished garnering compared with the imagination which it feeds through the senses, and with the reverent conception of the all-bounteous love, of which it deepens and enriches the tints eternally? “Open the shutters,” said a

Christian disciple of eighty years, as he lay dying, "let me die beholding the setting sun." And his life sweetly ebbed, solaced and awe-struck to its last pulse with the mystery of the sinking majesty of day. Yet what was the gorgeous phenomenon of the heavens to that thought which blazed in his departing spirit of a resurrection, beyond the grave, to a world where he could commune with God and angels in a communion far deeper than any here? As I stand above Niagara, and look upon the plunge of its flood into the mysterious abyss where its pure blue stream is shattered into foam and spray, the first thought is of the nothingness of man, and the solitary unapproachableness of the mighty Spirit, — the one and only enduring existence. Going and gone, — all but God's power. *That* is ever going, but never gone. All the nations and generations of men seem to have passed and to be passing over that brink, and to be lost in that abyss for ever. I am a speck of foam floating to the irrecoverable plunge. But instantly there come other thoughts and other images, — of the Father, and of immortality, and of the imperishableness of individual spirits, and of eternal peace reached through fidelity and self-surrender and death, — thoughts of which Jesus opens the clearest intuition, as the Father made the soul capable of grasping them and living in them. Nations perish; but souls abide in God, — as the blueness of waters is dashed to steam, but no particle is lost. Humanity loses itself in the gulf, with unceasing rush; but individual spirits pursue their unbroken way. And all the good and obedient souls who give themselves in fearless love, first to humanity and then to death, and in life and death to God, though in their mortal aspect, like specks of foam upon the cataract, are in their spiritual aspect like the glad, crested waters leaping up and on in the white robes of sacrifice, descending into the invisible abyss in obedience to the Holy Will, but rising again to sparkle in new, conscious joy in the eternal light. To a believer in Jesus, stand where he may, the God of "Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob," of the Indian and the Anglo-American, is not the God of the *dead*, but of the *living*. The issues of delight

and wonder to which Niagara and ocean open the sensibility they quicken, are but flashes of the glory to be revealed in us, — preludes to enrapturing demonstrations of ever-living love in scenes yet to be unfolded, where full-born minds shall be touched with it and be its ministers. So we hope in Jesus. Christ is the sun of Divine mercy, spanning the abyss of death with the bow of eternal promise. God make us thankful for that hope which fadeth not!

Let us learn this melody of the heart, which is to be the eternal song of redeemed souls. Let us become attuned to praise, and form an ear for the music of heaven. Let our thanksgiving be not annual, but perennial. Let us see to it what frame of spirit we build up as we live.

We shall perhaps confess, that we are not so grateful as we ought to be. It is easy to make this confession; and the readiness with which we may make it in the general proves that we deem that a slight deficiency which is deep and essential. For a soul not profoundly moved and blessed with the goodness of God is not fully born. It has not come into possession of its richest being. It enjoys but a pittance of Divine bounty, when it might enjoy a spiritual participation in all the goings-on of Divine love as a child of God and an heir of all things. We judge peremptorily, as defect of the heart, a want of right feeling towards a human benefactor. What, then, is a want of right feeling towards that God of mercies of whom the greatest human benefactor is but the hand, and the dearest human friend but the gift? And the cause of this closing and hardness of our spirits to the Divine appeals is often so deplorable! It is inattention. It is sometimes revelling in the profusion of bounty until we induce oblivion of the Spiritual Agent. We may bury ourselves under outward mercies until we cannot see the hand which brings them. We may forget God.

We forget God more easily because many things indispensable to our existence and comfort are brought to us so silently, that we scarcely reflect that there has been any intelligent agency concerned in them. It is as if an invisible being, without tangible shape or mortal tread, should furnish

one's apartments and spread his table, leaving him to enjoy the comforts so mysteriously bestowed. This ministry fails not; year by year his necessities are anticipated. We can see how such an unsought ministry, coming like the sun-rise, would lull his mind into a thoughtlessness of the guardian angel; and how a temporary interruption of it might be necessary to lead the recipient to the recognition of another mind. God is such a guardian angel. Thousands of gifts we feel not the want of enough to ask for. Sleep lays its soft hands without solicitation under many a weary head. Analogous to this provision for restoring our physical vigor is that constitution of the soul by which after sad events it finds respite from sorrow. Grief and anxiety cannot always oppress us. Apart from, or in addition to, religious consolation, time softens the painful stroke, and the exhausted soul re-acts. God visits us with unheard footstep.

And though all mankind receive not the same allotment, yet all do receive enjoyment in some way and measure. And, on close inspection, the advantage or the disadvantage peculiar to an individual or a class is found mixed with qualifying ingredients, which equalize human happiness and suffering. It is as if God labored to lessen the effect of that inequality of human circumstances which his Providence from a mysterious necessity permits, but whose causes his spirit must sometimes condemn. He softens, by merciful compensations, the evils which men are often culpable for not lessening. Divine compassion cannot altogether wait for the tardy relief of human justice. Not because human bondage delights the eye of Heaven, but because man cannot utterly defeat his universal love, the bondman forgets his captivity in jest and song. The poor man's diet may be received as the gift of God in a more touching sense than the rich man's luxury. If the sick-room of the cottage is not provided with all lenitives of pain, the opulent may bear them to the invalid's couch. The poorer render to the opulent, in their infirmities and distresses, aid not to be rewarded in gold. Somehow we may all, in the course of life, be givers and receivers pretty much alike. In spite of human unfaithfulness,

Providence blesseth us all through the instrumentality of one another. And the blessings of the highest order, those of the heart and spirit, depend little on differences of wealth and poverty, and are generally attainable by all who seek them with manful exertions.

But is there not much to be suffered in life? We cannot close our eyes to human suffering; yet, through all that is painful and uncertain, God's mercy endureth for ever. And the painful events which provoke thought sometimes result in a quickened sense of the most patient and constant love. We cannot give all the reason of suffering. We know not what is best or what is possible. We know the fact, that man is often indebted to the painful and destructive ways of the Divine dealing for much of his sensibility to good and to goodness. Some particular gift becomes an idol. It is an obstruction, not a medium, to seeing God. Withdrawn, attention is forced to the withdrawer. The withdrawer is seen to be the giver, and to have intended it to be enjoyed. The intention being seen, the springs of feeling flow. And whatever God gives or denies in the form of gifts, there he is always revealed in Christ, waiting for us to love him, that in proportion to what we give him he may enrich us. There is God himself, our Father, an infinite possession, the moment we will receive it. Affliction has so made many a soul look upward as to catch the benign expression of God. It sees the gracious intent. And we thus learn how to cultivate that spirit of thanksgiving which shall inly sing so long as we have being. We cannot bid our hearts feel grateful, and find emotions kindled by a command. But we can *look up*. We can attend to the divine intent in all things. We can note the fact of divine mercy in whatever befalls. We can *do*, and *continue* to do, something to express a requiting affection, and thus invite a more powerful affection to come forth from our unsoftened hearts; as a sluggish rivulet, by lowering here its bed, and there removing an obstruction, may be helped to flow on a steady, majestic stream.

There is a power in our being, when developed by the truth of the gospel, to rejoice evermore. And the truth re-

quires us to rejoice always, as much as to pray without ceasing. It is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning us, that in every thing we should give thanks. The more entirely we give up ourselves to do and bear the Divine will, the more shall we know of this vast joy of constant thanksgiving. Forsake a sin, conquer one bad habit, and you will have a new sense of the worth of being; you will be more grateful. Consecrate your soul by something actually done for the relief or amendment of others, and done for God. Radiate the light of divine love into some darkened mind, and nothing which can be told of the blessedness of thanksgiving will surpass your belief. But it must be a true offering. The spurious currency of promise will not pass at the gate of the New Jerusalem. The toll must be paid in the gold of deeds done for the Saviour of men and the Father of souls. What will you do for the cause of Christ? What will you give up to God's will? When it is in our hearts to requite benefactors, we love to give up something. A noble sentiment of man has erroneously shown itself in all the austerities of religious devotees. The devout heart demands to suffer, that it may prove its devotion. There is no need that it should spend itself in bootless austerities. There are real trials enough. There is real work enough. Let it bend itself lowly before God, the disappointer and chastiser. Let it not shrink from any thing painful in the calls of conscience and duty. Let it march in the van of that army of God whom the King of souls leads on to perpetual inroads into the kingdom of darkness. In view of its allotment of conflict or sacrifice, let it take up as the burthen of its daily ascription, as the refrain of its life-long ode, the sentiment of Jesus, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?"

The divine song of praise to God is that of a life governed by principles which eternity will sustain, and which make it a blessing to the world.

Let none of us, old or young, dare take life as it comes, without scrutinizing all that is done. Let us not dare yield ourselves either to idle ease or to selfish aims, content to en-

gross all possible comfort, and to leave all higher thoughts behind us. Let us not live for self, and pretend to be grateful. It is all mockery. It must end in condemnation. What will we do for God? What will we forego for righteousness' sake? Whoever acquires any good, or retains it, at the expense of integrity or faithfulness to truth, has no power to thank Heaven for it. God gave it not to him. It is plunder, not a divine gift. To do good and communicate, we must not forget. But one may give all his goods to feed the poor, and not possess the love which Jesus inculcates and Paul describes. We are not permitted to put a part for the whole. Justice to God, justice to man; justice in our thoughts, in our speech, in our feelings, in our deeds, — includes pecuniary liberality; but is as much greater than that as the arch of heaven is broader than the palm of the hand. We must give ourselves to God, — to his truth. This we may do in almost every sentiment we express, and almost every transaction between us and our fellows. Let a man live upon the principles of Jesus, — principles which shall call others to search their conduct, or inspire them to rise out of themselves, and his life will give some strains of the harmony which shall fill heaven.

GEORGE PEABODY'S CHARITIES.

THROUGH the newspapers, we all have learned of the successive benefactions of this distinguished banker. London and Baltimore and Harvard and Yale and Danvers and Georgetown and Exeter have reason to bless his memory, and will do it for ever. It is not the least result of his magnificent charities, that they here and there awaken a desire in others to go and do likewise. The offer of Mr. Stewart of New York, of one million of dollars for lodging-houses for the poor in that city, was probably suggested by the previous action of Mr. Peabody. When we mourn that evil examples are so often followed, we will remember that good examples are likewise contagious. We believe that there is

reason for thinking, that these munificent donations of Mr. Peabody are but the beginning of his large-hearted plans, and that a considerable portion of the immense fortune he still holds in reserve will ere long be appropriated to still vaster charitable designs.

There has been much discussion on the question, whether these gifts have been most wisely bestowed. Of course, there always will be criticism to follow such acts, and a plenty of people to disregard the homely proverb which warns us not to look a gift-horse in the mouth. Probably few persons have reflected upon the difficulty of bestowing money where one may be sure that it will do good. So much do times change, and needs change, and all material charities interfere with the natural laws of self-reliance and self-help, that no one can be certain that, a hundred years hence, what is now a blessing may not prove to be a nuisance.

At the late meeting of the British Social Congress, in Manchester, there was a protracted discussion on the subject of erecting houses for laboring people. Frequent allusions were made to Mr. Peabody's noble gift to London; but the question was asked, What, after all, is the extent of good it will accomplish? Amid a hundred thousand poor families, it will pick out here and there a few to place in better tenements. Compared with the whole mass of need, the relief is so very small, that the question arises, Could not the assistance have been made more diffusive? And, beside, What will be the effect upon the few who enjoy the benefits of this fund? Will it not be to weaken their sense of self-reliance, to make them more dependent upon aid? So that a few families, perhaps no more meritorious than hundreds of others, are singled out accidentally, and they perhaps in the end injured by being taught to lean upon others.

In allowing all just weight to these and like considerations, we must not overlook the influence upon a whole neighborhood, and upon a whole class, of one good example of neat and orderly living. The good lodging-house thus benefits, perhaps, a hundred families beside those who live in it. On this point we have been much struck with some remarks

made by the President of the Congress, the Earl of Shaftesbury. His words carry with them all the more weight because he prefers a method of providing good tenements for the poor widely different from that encouraged by Mr. Peabody. Indeed he said plainly, that, in his judgment, the erection of model houses was a great mistake. "They have done nothing, and can do nothing, to afford extensive relief; and no one of the schemes hitherto propounded holds out even the shadow of a promise." His lordship's plan is to repair, whitewash, ventilate, drain, and make wholesome and convenient, the houses *already built*, and which are scattered about all over the city in the near neighborhood of the work which the laboring class inhabiting them performs. The earl is president of a society formed to carry on this work; and, in describing its operations, he bears the following testimony to the influence of one good dwelling: "I had long coveted a court in a sad part of London; because I knew it to be a hotbed of fever, violence, and immorality. One house alone had produced twenty-two cases of fever in twelve months. At last, by the liberality of a widow lady, I obtained possession of it. The society went to work, and achieved its purpose. Turbulence and disease were banished. The medical man of the district writes, 'Fever is unknown in this once-pestilential court.' The police officers assure us, that, whereas in former days the constables never dared to enter it but in twos or threes, they now find it rarely necessary to go there at all. And the whole of this has been done in such a way, that the inmates enjoy a vastly increased accommodation, with no increase of rent; and the society receives upon its outlay a return of at least nine per cent."

Of course this is a noteworthy case; and it is good to show the influence of example on a whole neighborhood. With any thing like such pecuniary results as here indicated, we see no reason why the "Improved Industrial Dwellings' Company" should not extend its operations all over London, and completely supersede the need of Mr. Peabody's charity, if that be tied up to the necessity of *building* lodging-houses. We do not understand this to be the case. But we think

that the above facts suggest a deeper objection to the form of Mr. Peabody's beneficence; viz., that it provides permanently for a want which may exist only temporarily, and gives a large fund for an object which may soon attract to itself in other ways an adequate supply.

We have here brought before us a point which deserves special attention. In the bestowment of a million of dollars for public uses, it seems obvious that a thoughtful and conscientious donor will have reference to the needs which are the hardest to supply. Thus hospitals for the sick and the maimed do not need large charities. They may be safely left to public sympathies, which are usually quick enough to meet such wants; but there are other great needs of a community to which it is difficult to draw generous aid, and to these the benefactions of the wealthy are most timely and appropriate. Needs of this class may go for generations unsupplied, unless provided for in this manner.

Unhappily the judgment of the affluent testator is apt to be biassed by a multitude of extraneous considerations. These may arise from his sympathy with obstacles that have most blocked up *his* way in his life, or with sufferings that *he* has happened to see, from a desire to perpetuate his name with some separate and prominent object, from his very limited view of what the public now needs, from the impossibility of his seeing what the public may need a hundred years hence, from a natural wish to have the warm praises of his contemporaries, whose gratitude will be measured according as their favorite objects are helped; and, where the aged millionaire is free from all these sources of error, not unlikely he may be exposed to the urgent solicitation of friends whom he will take into his counsel, in which case, perhaps, the result will be, that his fortune will go to the object which they can agree upon, rather than to what the public most needs.

We have sometimes thought, that, considering these and like facts, a man, designing a large gift to public uses, might well consider the propriety of leaving it in trust to eminent official personages, to be applied to objects which from time

to time they shall deem most worthy of aid. Sectarian religion and party politics might be expressly set aside from the hope of help; but, with this exclusion, an honored senate of seven or nine persons, to be perpetuated like Governors, Judges, and Presidents of colleges, might be intrusted with the free management of a large fund. It would then act beneficently according to the varying needs of the times. It would be intrusted to the highest wisdom of successive generations, and not to the direction of a parchment made by a short-sighted individual a hundred years ago.

We should be sorry to be thought insensible to the munificence of the honored founder of the Lowell Institute. But we have often questioned his wisdom in tying up his bequest to the form of lectures. At the time of his death, *lectures* were coming into fashion; but will they be in fashion fifty years hence? Nay, does it need a princely bequest to sustain a course of popular lectures, costing perhaps fifty cents to each of those attending them, which sum not one would refuse if called upon to give? A noble opportunity was thrown away. We cannot refrain from adding, that the course recently adopted of appropriating the Lowell fund to courses of high scientific lectures and advanced instruction is redeeming this bequest, in part, from the objection here adverted to.

The writer of this is not connected with Harvard College, is not even an alumnus of that institution, though he loves it scarcely less than the apple of his eye. A noble library-building, with ample array of books and copies of ancient statues and celebrated pictures, affording a pleasing resort and a rich feast to the thousands of all opinions, who for all time to come will cluster around Boston, — is not this an object worthy of the munificence of the wealthy testator? Its influence would be incalculable and permanent, and above all class distinctions, as it would be free to all, like the air we breathe. And it has this special claim, that it is just one of those cases of public need which do not appeal to temporary and heated sympathies, and is therefore likely to go for many years unsupplied.

We are thankful to Mr. Peabody for establishing the Professorship and Museum of Ethnology. We know not under what sympathies or advice this charity has been designated. It is princely in amount, and we feel towards the giver a sense of profound gratitude. In many respects a professorship of this new science will be useful. It may do something to counteract the effect of Southern writers on this subject, who have made themselves so noisy and prominent, that, in Europe, the American School of Ethnology is understood to mean the class of men who maintain the primitive and penal degradation of the black race, and the impossibility of its receiving the white man's civilization. The whole subject, too, of the Indian races on this continent ought to be most carefully attended to *now*, while we have access to the fast disappearing remains of the aboriginal tribes, and can collect specimens of skulls. Moreover, a professorship is needed to show up the absurdity of much European balderdash as to the effect of the American climate on races of men here living. As long as it is soberly maintained, that races must of necessity here degenerate, that man can never in this climate and on this continent attain to a European standard of physical and intellectual development, there will be something for the Harvard professor to say. Prof. Gould's admirable collection of facts in regard to the stature and weight of the American soldiers, as compared with those of Europe, will be of some service here. This wide and free mingling of so many races on our continent seems to prefigure the rise of a nobler type of humanity than the world has yet seen, as it was some similar commingling that was at the bottom of Grecian and Roman greatness. It is undoubtedly true, that as a people we have not yet learned to live in the circumstances in which we find ourselves on this new continent. Five or six generations are not enough to acclimatize us. We have much to learn about food and warmth and ventilation, and exposure to our winds, and the true methods of rearing healthy men and women. All thanks to the generous benefactor who is opening the way for this knowledge.

M.

HYMNS FROM THE GERMAN.

TO THE ORIGINAL MELODIES.

LVIII.

FRÖHLICH SOLL MEIN HERZE SPRINGEN.

From the Gemeinschaftliches Gesangbuch.—PAUL GERHARD.
 Nach eigener Melodie ; oder, "Warum sollt' ich," &c.

JOYFUL be my spirit singing,
 On the day, With the lay
 Of the angels ringing.
 Heaven and Earth, spread wide your hearing ;
 Shouting cry, All the sky,
 "Christ is now appearing."

How can God look on despising,
 Who thus gives Him that lives,
 Dear beyond all prizing ?
 God, to light the world's dark story,
 Sends his Son From the throne
 Of his might and glory.

Now he lies within his manger,
 Calling thus All of us,
 Sweetly, in our danger :
 "Brothers dear, now learn to banish
 Fears that rack ; Stores that lack
 My grace shall replenish."

Ho ! draw nigh with free petitions,
 Great and small, One and all
 Climates and conditions !
 Love him who with love is glowing ;
 See the star, Now not far,
 Light and peace bestowing.

When the heart with grief is swelling,
 Lo ! a door Opens o'er
 To the upper dwelling :
 Mark it well, and it shall guide thee
 To the place Where no face
 Grooms or threats beside thee.

When the load of sorrow presses,
 When your sin Deeper in
 Pricks with its distresses, —
 Courage ! if near him thou keepest,
 Who is made Healing aid
 Where thy wounds are deepest.

Ye forlorn, the poor and needy,
 Hither flee, Footsteps free,
 Hands of faith held steady.
 Here are all good gifts and treasures,
 And the gold, All heart-told
 In the Spirit's measures.

Let me, Lord, be duty doing,
 To Thee near While I'm here,
 With Thee homeward going :
 There shall hope be always vernal ;
 No alloy With the joy
 Of the life eternal.

N. L. F.

THE CHARACTER OF PASCAL.

PASCAL was a personality apart, with ideas proud as his intellect, with faith apparently humble and sincere as his heart ; but, in reality, more wilful than natural, and under-arched by a scepticism awful to himself. This sceptical character of his mind is conclusively shown by Cousin, in his celebrated report to the French Academy on the " Thoughts ;" and later editions of his posthumous writings have brought to light the unscrupulous changes and suppressions, practised by the first editors. Dr. Lélut has demonstrated, in his instruc-

tive treatise, "*L'Amulette de Pascal*," the deeply diseased condition, in his later years, of both the body and the mind of this great, unfortunate genius.

With a nervous system overcharged with force and out of equilibrium, the brain expending an abnormal share of his vitality, his strange precocity deprived him of boyhood: while others of his age were happy at their sports, he was by himself, earnestly grappling with the deepest questions; now wresting brilliant secrets from science with joy and glory, now musing over the darker problems of human nature; pale, weary, sad, hopelessly baffled in reason, imperiously remanded by his education and his heart to faith. He early became an invalid, and was scarcely ever after free from pain. As time wore on, his state grew worse. His excessive mental labors shattered his constitution. A morbid depreciation of the worth of all worldly aims gradually possessed him. He became extremely unhappy, not merely in his outward relations, but also in his speculations. His vast genius, out of tune and balance, saw disproportion, misery, and frightful mystery everywhere. He furnished another exemplification of the truth, that great men, unless blessed with health, are more unhappy than others, because their transcendent powers are intrinsically less harmonized with their earthly conditions. Their faculties overlap the world; and the superfluous parts, finding no correspondent object, no soothing returns, are turned into wretchedness. Pascal asks, "Shall he who alone knows nature alone be unhappy?" Yes: if knowledge of nature be the pioneer of discord and rebellion against nature. Only let love for what is known, and conformity to it, keep even pace with knowledge, and the more one knows the happier he will be. But there is danger with great genius, especially if there is any disbalancement in it, that perception will generate undue feeling,—feeling out of tune with the facts, and therefore a source of irritable wretchedness.

This is clearly to be seen in the case of Pascal himself. He wore an iron girdle stuck full of steel thorns, which he pressed into his side whenever worldly thoughts allured him. "Seek no satisfaction on earth," he said; "hope nothing from

men; your good is in God alone." A true religious philosophy would rather say, Seek a relative satisfaction in every normal fact of nature, every finite manifestation of the will of God: never despair of your fellow-men: whatever the God of nature has made, is good; whatever the God of grace does, is well. The sound master of moral insight labors to ennoble human nature and life by every possible imaginative aggrandizement and exaltation: the school represented by Pascal strives to demean human nature and life by every possible imaginative impoverishment and degradation. This direful mistake is committed in the imagined interest of a supernatural antidote for the bane of a ruined world. It aggravates the evils it seeks to cure, by exciting what needs to be soothed; namely, the friction of man with his fate.

The noble but overstrung sensibility of Pascal is shown by the fact, that once, when Arnauld seemed to prefer peace to truth, the shock of grief and pain was so great that he fainted away. To read his meditations on the nature and state of man is like wandering through some mighty realm of desolation, where gleams of light fall on majestic ruins, lonely columns, crumbling aqueducts, shattered and moss-grown temples. His logic, his rigor, his irony, did shining and permanent service to morality in the "Provincial Letters." But, in his "Thoughts," a dark tinge of disease, a perverse extravagance, vitiate the unquestionable originality; and give the whole strain of argument an unsoundness as gloomy and pervading as the intellect is powerful and the rhetoric brilliant. He sees man suspended between the two abysses of infinity and nothingness. He never wearies of varying the melancholy antithesis of the sublimity and the contemptibleness of man, the grandeur and the misery of our nature and lot. Man is a chimera, an incomprehensible monster, a contradiction, a chaos; judge of all things, victim of all; depositary of truth, sewer of error; the brother of the brutes, the equal of the angels; the glory and the scum of the universe. He is a closed and inexplicable enigma, — unless we accept the scheme of Christianity in the dogmatic exposition of the Catholic Church. Original sin is the key to the otherwise

incomprehensible riddle. The violence of its fall in Adam crushed human nature into a mass of piteous and venerable ruins; an incongruous collection of suns and dunghoops.

The genius of Pascal is displayed in the magnificence of his lamentations, the gorgeous ornaments with which he enhances the degeneracy he describes. His disease is revealed in the dismal melancholy he throws over all, and in the perverse factitiousness of his remedial devices. "Vulgar Calvinism," Hallam says, "exhibits man as a grovelling Caliban; Pascal paints him as a ruined archangel." But both endeavor to exaggerate the evils of our nature and deepen the darkness of our state, in order to lend increased preciousness and splendor to the supernatural antidote. This method surely violates the moderation of nature, the sanity of reason. Imagination is given us to secure equilibrium in our powers and conditions; to bring in ideal compensations for actual defects; to harmonize our nature and lot. It is a dreadful abuse to employ it to multiply incongruities and annoyances, enlarge existing disbalancements, and intensify discords already experienced. To see the truth, and conform to it what is out of proportion, is the final cure for every human ill; to aggravate a malady, half supposititious, so as to give imaginary value to some artificial panacea, is the method of quacks and dupes.

The soul of Pascal was a lonely battle-field, — the scene of a struggle between opposite tendencies, which must sometimes have been as terrible as it was noiseless and hidden. His logical acuteness and intrepidity penetrated sophisms, and exposed the innumerable difficulties and perplexities of human life in their most formidable array; while his fears, affections, weakness, made him cling to the Catholic creed. His sublime imagination pictured man as a grain of dust on the earth; the earth itself as a grain of dust in the bosom of nature, the eternal silence of whose boundless spaces was frightful to him. Disease made deeper encroachments on his digestive organs and on his brain. He was weary of the struggles of the few for glory; sick of the insincerity and frivolity of the many; and often said, "I shall die alone." Although he was never

personally a misanthrope, his fearful insight of the frenzied self-love, the folly, vanity, flippancy, and falsehood of common men, painfully alienated him from them. He says, "If all men knew what others say of them, there would not be four friends in the world." And his desire for friendly fellowship, his feeling of his own loneliness, appear clearly enough from the following paragraph: "The little communication that we can have in the study of the abstract sciences disgusted me with them. But I expected to find many companions in the study of man. I was deceived. There are still fewer who study man than who study geometry."

He had suffered two attacks of partial paralysis in his limbs; attacks which seemed, however, not to touch his mind. While in this weak condition, driving across one of the bridges over the Seine, the horses took fright and leaped off, leaving the carriage poised on the edge. The shock affected him so severely that he from that time frequently had the hallucination of an abyss yawning at his side. In this state, his sister, a devoted nun, persuaded him forever to abandon the world. Disappointed, sick, excited, his capacious mind hungering for truth and peace in the infinite, he turned with a morbid eagerness to the seclusion and austerity of Port Royal. There he gave the last eight years of his life — from his thirty-first to his thirty-ninth year — almost exclusively to religious meditation, and to literary labors for the cause of Christianity.

The hypochondriacal state of Pascal betrays itself through all his poetic sophistry and glorious declamation. Health, without denying the evil of the world, enjoys its good; and tries, by making the best of it, to rise into something better. It is disease that re-acts against it in disgust and horror, and paints it a thousand times worse than it is, in order to lend a keener relish to some theoretic good. The incongruities of human nature are better explained by the doctrine of a tentative progress towards our destiny — an advance still incomplete, with complicated faculties not yet harmonized — than by the doctrine of the Fall, which simply adds a new problem, more fearful than the one it professes to solve. If man stands

midway between infinity and nothing, — which is an oratoric, not a philosophic expression, — his desires allying him to that, his attainments to this; if he clasps hands on one side with the ape, on the other side with the angel, — it is that he has risen thus high, and his passions are not yet equilibrated with his conditions, rather than that he has fallen thus low, and in his plunge been caught there by grace, and is now torn by the contradictory attractions of salvation and perdition. The facts of the problem are far more satisfactorily solved by the idea, that the exorbitant faculties and demands of man are the preparatory rudiments of the divine estate he is to inherit than by the idea that they are the discordant fragments of a celestial state from which he has been expelled. Man is a child of nature, sensuously chained to the earth, but ideally scaling the heights of immensity; not a lord of heaven tumbled in ruins, moaning over what he has lost, while clutching at what is within his reach. But Pascal took the latter view. He fought down his doubts, or thrust them out of sight, and clung frantically to the traditional theology, as a shipwrecked man to a spar. We see his face look out at us as he drifts, a white and piteous speck of humanity, in the black flood. He regarded the soul as the convulsed ground of a supernatural conflict between the fiends of nature and the ministry of grace. He called man a reed that thinks. His mind was alone, a geometric point of thought in the infinitude of space. Impelled by the grandeur of his soaring mind and the wretchedness of his tortured body, both aggravated by the theological scheme reciprocally ministering to them and ministered to by them, he was constantly darting to and fro between the two poles of imagination, All and Nothing; and constantly associating one of these monstrous extremes with every thing human. Shocked and lacerated by such a tremendous vibration, no wonder his strength so early gave way, no wonder his view of life was so overwrought. The disease which the surgeons laid bare in his gangrened vitals and brain is equally revealed by a psychological autopsy of his writings, — gangrenous blotches interspersing the splendid and electric pages. Thus, in his self-depreciating unhappi-

ness and solitude, he affirmed that it was sinful for any one to love a creature so unworthy as he, and so soon to perish.

Perhaps the most pathetic passage from his pen — when we view it in the light of his pure character, transcendent talents, and sad biography — is the following: "Man has, springing from the sense of his continual misery, a secret instinct that leads him to seek diversion and employment from without. And he has, remaining from the original greatness of his nature, another secret instinct, which teaches him that happiness can exist only in repose. From these two contrary instincts there arises in him an obscure propensity which prompts him to seek repose through agitation, and even to fancy that the contentment he does not enjoy will be found, if, by struggling yet a little longer, he can open a door to rest." He had known long ages in thought and feeling, but not forty years in time, when death kindly opened for him the door to rest.

W. R. A.

FARMER'S FESTIVALS.

STATE, county, and town Agricultural Exhibitions constitute a noteworthy feature of our New-England life. We judge that there has been this year no diminution in the wide and deep interest with which they are regarded; and, if they serve to attach a greater interest to the farmer's occupation, who will not be grateful that they are growing in public favor?

We have read with pleasure the reports of these exhibitions, so widely published during the past few weeks; and we wish to express a few thoughts which they have suggested.

In comparing the traits of character which different modes of life naturally beget, we see that the love of novelty and excitement, for which city life is notorious, comes not merely because people there are thick together, but has a deeper reason in their occupations and amusements, which keep up a quick, superficial activity, making men fickle and impulsive,

giving them eagerness for sensations that demand aliment to sustain them, and find a coveted outlet in any new wonder and alarm. Hence cities have always been the hotbed of violence, from the time that Jack Cade, four hundred years ago, led all London by the ears, down through the long history of riots in Manchester, Liverpool, Paris, Philadelphia, Boston, and New York.

Equally apparent is it that commercial classes have not been remarkable for their local attachments. Why should they be? Their occupations, thoughts, and tastes are cosmopolitan. With their accumulated wealth, they love to spread around them the luxuries and refinements of life, but have too often stood aloof from every thing else, and been indifferent to public interests and the affairs of State.

As to manufacturing classes, it has often been observed that they have shown a marked proclivity for schemes and delusions. Perhaps the constant use of machinery gives a mechanical turn to their whole nature; and as they see that society and life rub hard with them, and show a screw loose somewhere, they are ready to try any thing that promises to put them into better gear, and oil their creaking friction. In England, the craziest doctrines and the most absurd nostrums find the readiest credence in Lancashire and Staffordshire; and there are indications that a corresponding fact is true in this country.

It is of no special importance to say any thing distinctly of the professional and literary classes; for their influence, though precious in kind, is but little in volume, compared with that of the only other large class that remains to be noticed, — we mean the landed class. What is it that places in the hands of farmers this priceless element of public stability? Is it that their property is in acres, solid and immovable, on which they were born, where they expect to die, and to leave their graves and those of their fathers to their children?

No doubt there is something in this; but the very nature of their occupations makes them peaceful and steadfast. They are away from the scenes of passionate rivalries and strifes. They are surrounded by the calm and endearing in-

fluences of nature, and are moulded by them. They have time for thought. The voices that whisper in their ears invite to reflection. No other men pass their days amid so few frivolities. Life flows in deep channels, not often disturbed, nor easily changed. It is obvious that here are some of the leading causes of the well-known stability of the landed class.

On the thousand farms of our country, there has been ripening the past season one kind of fruit of which no account has been taken in the Agricultural Exhibitions, though in value it surpasses every thing seen in them all. The long days of toil, the calm evening hour of thought, the glories of the rising and setting sun, the gentle showers, the viewless winds, the blooming clover, the growing corn, the mellowing harvests, the stormy-day's reading, the sabbath-day's worship, all have contributed to its growth. It is a love of our country; an intelligent comprehension of its true interests and duties; a determination that, however impulsive and fickle other classes may be, the just and the right shall be firmly upheld by the great rural mass of our people. Has the whole wealth of the nation a greater security than this?

How we felt that security, and trustingly leaned upon it, in the dark days of the late war! Cities might vote one way or another, and the multitude be swayed back and forth in the crowded manufacturing centres; but, under God, the rock of our trust was in that great farming population that had taken this matter into their keeping, and knew what they were about. We remembered that, when they put their hands to the plough, they were not in the habit of looking back. We knew that, to quote the striking words of Job, they were "in league with the stones of the field;" and the man of Uz had no idea how many and what fast ones we have.

It was the singular merit of the late President of the United States, — and, as much as he has been praised, this trait in his character has not been too often dwelt upon, — it was his pre-eminent aim to keep the war in the hands of the people, and of the mass of the rural people. With his intuitive sagacity he saw, that, if the landed interest of the coun-

try felt that this war was their war, there would be no backing out. He kept himself in the rear, — too much so, we at first thought; and blamed him for it, till we understood him. He did not talk about "my war, my campaign, my policy." He did not attempt to force the deep popular instincts to bend to his will, but had a religious reverence for them, as something which no wise statesmanship should offend, and no official authority can resist.

And so, at all times, the stability of the country rests in the multitude of its homesteads. It was because foreigners overlooked this, that they made such blundering prophecies. They saw hardly any thing but the rabble of New-York City. But what is the rabble of New-York City by the side of the farmers of a continent? It is less than the noise of the boiling kettle in the farmer's kitchen. The cooking will go on orderly, and dinner be got ready, for all the sputtering of the pot. Paris is France; but a dozen New Yorks would not be the United States.

It was through a rare sagacity that our institutions placed political power in the multitude of homesteads. No other country has done this so largely; that is, none has steadied the pyramid of the State on so broad a basis. That legislation seems eminently statesmanlike which multiplies our homesteads, and begins as soon as possible to make a homestead for our people of every descent and color.

Nor, finally, do we think that the force of what we have now said is weakened by suggesting, that, after all, farmers are divided in opinion, like every other class. Undoubtedly, this is true in relation to a thousand subordinate questions; and all the more true is it, because, from the vast extent of our country, the variety of its agricultural interests, and the sparseness of its rural population, there is probably less class-influence with farmers than with any other men. But on questions that appeal directly to the primal instincts of patriotism and freedom, of justice and right, what class responds with more unanimity? In what great crisis of our country has it failed? And why is it that trembling politicians look upon the returns from one or two of the farming

States first voting as the sure premonition of the general popular will, and stand aghast at the handwriting on the wall ?

M.

A POINT TO CARRY.

A FRIEND applies this significant phrase to preaching. An indeterminate man, who is only groping to find his way, and has no distinct, sure word of prophecy in his heart, has no place in the pulpit and no call to preach. Our Liberal Christians have given up the old assumption of the Catholic Church, of spiritual authority; they have ceased to believe in the fearful alternative of the Calvinist: they can neither summon men to an only fold of safety, nor warn them "to flee from the wrath to come." What is then left for the modern Unitarian preacher to do? What special or distinctive point has he to carry? He cannot arrogate any special grace; he cannot threaten a coming judgment or the terrors of the law. After having surrendered so much, may it be that Christianity is wasted into a shadow, and contains no longer a divine reality and substance? Is it true that a man who cannot preach the old dogmas cannot preach any thing? The most believing men among us are compelled to admit, that the life has gone from the former methods and doctrines. What in times past was felt to be the power of the pulpit is now only an element of weakness, because we no longer believe in our own authority, and those words of warning of which the Scripture is so full, we now read as Oriental metaphors, — as very good poetry, but very false theology. Our interpretation takes all the point and all the force out of those startling appeals of the old sermons which made sinners tremble, and flee to the church as the only ark of refuge.

The questions that arise are very serious ones. Is there, as is so often maintained, an absolute decay of faith; or does faith now run in new and deeper channels? It is to be hoped

that there is no spiritual loss in all the wreck of old and popular beliefs. The great human needs remain the same as ever. The human heart is unchanged, and still prays as the Psalmist prayed so many ages ago. But this is not all. The same sources of comfort and strength are open now as of old, — the same fountains of eternal life. The grand old Bible remains, not a warning or promise lost out of it, as fresh to-day as when its heavenly truths first fell from the Saviour's lips. Who has exhausted its treasures? Who has outgrown its ideal of the Perfect Life? You will find the heavenly beatitudes still declared in its pages, and all the assurances of life and immortality. Its great ideas still engage our human hearts. The old dogmas that grew around them in ruder ages may be stripped off; but their elemental truth remains, and vital as ever. It is a poor, superficial Unitarianism that, in renouncing the Trinity, ceases to believe in Father, Son, or Holy Ghost. Pruning away the exaggerations of theology ought not to be a mere process of denial, but a drawing nearer to the naked truth, a revealing in clearer light of divine realities. So, in our progress, I cannot believe that we lose any living word. The river that once made glad the city of God has not yet run dry. Its living waters still flow through the living hearts of men. Forms have changed. Doctrines have been qualified and softened; first denied, then re-interpreted and re-affirmed.

Has the liberal preacher nothing to say, no point to carry? The answer depends on the measure of his progress. The great currents of humanity are deep within the soul. So are the currents of revelation deeper than the letter. He who has not gone beyond a denial of old doctrines has nothing left except the practical moralities, which are but the clothing and outside of religion. Feeling no power of the Holy Spirit, he has no word of God to utter. Having no experience of the higher life and the world to come, he cannot call men to repentance, or tell them how to put on Christ. He who is not regenerate himself, how shall he preach of the Transfiguration, of the glories of the Mount and the open heavens? There is no reason, certainly no good reason, why the

preacher to-day, though without dogma and outside the great ecclesiasticisms, is not alive with enthusiasm and faith and love, — no reason why he is dull and vague, pointless and powerless. He has, — or he ought to have, by the winnowing through which he has gone in thought and life — the corn without the husk, the kernel without the shell, the spirit that underlies the letter. He has, or he ought to have, the living bread just as it comes down from heaven; and his preaching ought to be the breaking of this bread to the people who hunger and wait before him. The liberal preacher must go down beneath the forms of doctrine to the great realities, deal with the truths which dogmas and forms represent; then he will have glow and unction, something to say, and a point to carry.

Is it asked whether there are these realities left after the denials of our Liberal Theology? While confessing ourselves unable to perceive, from the standpoint of simple naturalism, the sense or the object of preaching, we yet maintain that the Unitarian pulpit fills an important place among the wants and vitalities of the age. By the excess of its sceptical criticism, it may so far decline as to quite lose its power and never fulfil its mission. But we hope for it a more legitimate, a nobler, and better destiny, — a destiny worthy of its traditions and early promise, worthy also of the saintly names that have given it a history, and made it one of the leading spiritual forces in our New-England life. Out of an experience gathered from both strict and liberal influences, we are able to affirm a faith in all the great spiritual truths of revelation; and the liberal preacher, if he is devout and believing, can answer all the wants of the needy, asking, human heart. As much as others, he has the high vantage-ground of faith to stand on, and the inspiration of the highest truth to give him earnestness, and kindle his soul and his speech as with a live coal from off the altar. And no preaching is so good as that which comes out of the life, — out of what one not only believes in, but loves. Preach what you have gone through and felt yourself. Inward Christian experience runs parallel to the life of Christ as we read it in the gospel.

One interprets the other. Christ so formed within us inspires a perfect faith. No mere creed, however correct intellectually, can give so much moral vitality. With *that* as an interior, ruling power, preaching becomes alive with the least as well as with the most gifted minds. With *that*, you are religiously prepared for the great apostolic work. With *that*, as it seems to us, there is but one thing which is the all-important, all-comprehending truth to be affirmed of Christ, that he is essentially Divine, not after any dogmatical way, but after the manner of John in his Gospel. That is a point to make.

There is also the Spiritual Life, not necessarily a mechanical, church life, but the holiness, the peace and joy which men have had in believing and have carried into their living, and by which they have overcome the world. Preach that life, how sin wastes it, and righteousness increases it; and here you can frame an alternative more startling than any doctrine of heaven and hell. It is a more fearful thing to lose one's spiritual life than it is to suffer any literal punishment. This is another point to make.

With these positive ideas, the Divine Christ as inspiration and centre and source of thought, and the Spiritual Life as aim and object and destiny, the preacher has sure ground to stand on, sure promise and blessing to announce. As long as he has faith in them, he cannot be dull, he cannot exhaust his themes, he cannot tire of his work; he will always have something to say, and a point to carry.

Above all, let not the preacher fear, that after a while he will wear out, or use up the old Bible from which these ideas come; that, in giving supernatural fact and history, he will give only "old wives' fables," and not eternal truths. The greatest things in that book are not too great for human necessity and hope. They are only on a level with our human suffering and sorrow. In their highest sense, they but just meet the aspiration and want of the heart. Any thing less would not answer or satisfy. Men ask great questions under the pressure of their bereavements and trials and doubts, and all the gospel assurances of immortality are not

more than they demand and want. Let the preacher beware lest, through his own scepticism or inexperience of heavenly things, he "give them a stone for bread." Men who are sitting in silent and desolate homes, whose hearts are darkened by the shadow of death, are not comforted or healed, except by the Infinite Love. To them there is no gospel, if you leave out the risen Christ. If there be no such high, divine fact in all this world of suffering and death, "then," says St. Paul, "is our preaching vain." D. C.

RANDOM READINGS.

[Without asking permission of our Friend Sears, we venture to insert what follows.—E.]

TOO GOOD TO BE LOST.

THANKING the editors of the "Magazine" for their interesting accounts of the Conference at Syracuse, I was sorry to miss the narrative of an experience of one of them in his ministry, given on that occasion, and too important to go unrecorded. If his modesty will excuse it, I will try to recall the circumstances, as related at the Conference, using, in his case, the third person for the first. Mr. S. went to a certain town, on a cold, stormy morning, to preach. He found the church was not opened, and saw no signs of congregation or sexton.

Directly opposite was a Methodist church, to which he went as a hearer. The preacher, knowing his auditor, went to him, and insisted on his occupying the pulpit for the morning, instead of himself. At the close of the services, the Methodist brother, without consulting Mr. S., gave notice that he would preach again in the afternoon, adding, "I want you to go home, and inform everybody you can see, that Mr. S. is to preach this afternoon; and I am sure we shall have a full house to hear him." Mr. S. told him he was sorry he had done it; for he was not prepared to preach to his people. He had brought with him only such ser-

mons as were suited to a Unitarian congregation. "I will risk that," said his brother; "give them the same doctrine you have this morning."

When the afternoon came, a large congregation appeared; and the preacher was gratified with their earnest and undivided attention. At the close of the exercises, our Methodist brother again spoke very commendingly of his services. "But," said Mr. S., "I have not given your people such sermons as I wanted to; I am sorry to have presented to them just such views as I have. If I had thought of occupying your pulpit, I should have taken very different ones."—"Do not trouble your mind about that," was the reply; "I liked every word you have given us: it was not any too liberal; *and it is what we have all got to come to.*"

Much as the occasion of this mission to a Methodist congregation is to be regretted, and mortified as we are that one of our own churches should have failed altogether of any service on the day specified, the result was most happy for the great cause of Christian charity, brotherly love, and a true gospel fellowship. We doubt whether our brother ever preached with a better effect.

Two things are apparent. There is a growing and blessed largeness of spirit among our Methodist friends, both ministers and people. Let us meet it with a prompt and generous response on our own part. This incident speaks volumes of the needs of our small country societies. Local conferences are demanded to bring every one of them into fellowship with our whole body. God speed the day when the feeblest of these societies shall be brought into a life-union with the strongest! With Christ now recognized as the Head of the Church by a solemn and determined consent at our great Conference, we need only to organize ourselves thoroughly; and nowhere will the doors of our sanctuaries be closed by any moral freezing, but we shall one and all throng to our altars, rejoice in our worship, and carry its rich savor out, with a broad and liberal faith, into a life of zealous piety, and practical and consistent virtue. A. B. M.

[We did not see the above till it was in print. Our good friend A. B. M. mistakes in some particulars. We did not apologize to our Methodist brother for preaching a Unitarian sermon in his pulpit. It was not distinctively such; and his commendation of it was no compromise of his orthodoxy. We cited the incident to show how Methodist churches are alive because of their warm Christian fellowship, and how Unitarian churches freeze to death for the want of it.—s.]

RESULTS OF RATIONALIZINGS.

[It is just as well that our friends who are criticising and questioning should see what is before them; and so we have selected the following paragraphs from the last "Westminster."—E.]

"If the whole history of its alleged Founder is full of uncertainties or impossibilities or contradictions, we have simply to acknowledge that his teaching and his acts are hidden from us by an impenetrable veil; and if, on the other hand, the work of reconstruction is to be accomplished, it must be effected by the production of strictly contemporary evidence, by testimony equal to that on which we give credence to the history of *Magna Charta* or the Highland rebellion of 1745. But when a series of documents are shown to be utterly inconsistent with each other, whenever they furnish an independent narrative, or else repeat in the same words the events and discourses which they relate in common; when, further, it is admitted that we have not the faintest reason for thinking that they were written in the age of which they profess to give the annals; and, above all, that they exhibit an endless chain of marvellous or prodigious incidents, not one of which is worthy of credit,—the effort to restore the original lineaments of a picture which has been daubed and altered by successive hands becomes not merely a work of supererogation, but an unprofitable and mischievous pastime. The most prominent characteristic of all the Gospels is a lavish display of miracle, intertwined inextricably with the narrative of incidents which appear possible or likely, and which may be historical. But, if this chain of supernatural causation, or rather this series of arbitrary inferences, which are no cause and produce no results, is to be swept away at a stroke, it argues an unbounded credulity, if we accept particular details as historical without corroborative evidence from other witnesses known to be contemporary. If it be true, as M. Renan holds it to be true, that the narrative of the infancy as given in the first Gospel excludes altogether the narrative of the third; if all the miracles of all the Gospels are to be thrust aside as incredible; if, in the one Gospel which he holds to be, as a history, more trustworthy than the rest, the discourses of which its main bulk consists are absolute fictions, destitute of the slightest semblance of probability,—it follows irresistibly that the credit of

the Gospels is in every respect gone. We can trust no information derived from them, even in the commonest matters, unless we can test it by other evidence on the same subject procured elsewhere."

"If M. Renan's account of the Gospels be correct, we have no better materials for reconstructing the figure of the historical Jesus than for reproducing that of the historical Agamemnon. In attempting either task, we are chasing a will-of-the-wisp."

"M. Renan himself seems consciously to shut his eyes to the havoc which he has made in the only original sources of information respecting the origin of Christianity, by sweeping away all narratives of miracles and prodigies which occur throughout them. The residuum of fact left in the Gospels is confessedly almost infinitesimally small."

"THE LORD GOD WALKED IN THE GARDEN IN THE COOL OF THE DAY."—
 "ABIDE WITH US, FOR IT IS TOWARD EVENING, AND THE DAY IS FAR
 SPENT."—"AND THE EVENING AND THE MORNING WERE THE FIRST DAY."

TRULY the first! in senses more than one,
 God in the morning, and at eve the Son;
 Truly the first! in spirit and in power;
 Jesus at night, God in the early hour.

When time was young, in those primeval days,
 God walked and talked, but scarce in human ways;
 For though he grants his presence and his grace,
 E'en Israel's leader must not see his face.

'Tis so with childhood: how, we scarce can tell,
 And yet to God it nearer seems to dwell;
 'Tis in the virgin prime, and morning cool,
 We look for God, and find him in the soul.

Stay with us, Father, till the noontide heat,
 Of passion and of sin its fury beats;
 Stay with us, Father, till the sun goes down,
 And Jesus comes: we dare not be alone.

Come, then, dear Saviour, early in the day, —
Come in our childhood, ever with us stay ;
Wait not till noon is passed, the sun gone down ;
But come, abide with us, ere night comes on.

From morn till eve, from eve till morning light,
Keep us, dear Father, ever in thy sight ;
Come like the Dove, in Spirit-power descend,
And be henceforth, our Father, Saviour, Friend.

* * *

GLEANINGS FROM FOREIGN PERIODICALS.

THE London "Times" has an interesting article on the disappearance of the cholera from that city. Compared with former visitations of this disease, the mortality was small. After adding what should be allowed for imperfection of returns, from cases not reported, and from others not regarded as cholera, but which perhaps came under this class, the sum total of deaths will not exceed eight thousand. This, in the immense population of London, is not so large a mortality as many other diseases, not generally dreaded, often inflict. The "Times" infers, that at length the cholera has been mastered ; that science knows how to treat it, and to deprive it of its terrors. The same article dwells upon another gratifying fact, in review of the recent history of the disease. The extent to which charitable provision was made for the relief of the poor, suffering through the cholera, seems a noble testimony to public beneficence. The Metropolitan Relief Society had over three hundred and fifty thousand dollars placed at its disposal, a sum amply sufficient for all the demands made upon it ; and it would have been largely increased, had any necessity called for it.

THE unanimity of the Venetians in voting for annexation to Italy is some indication of what they have found the Austrian rule to be. Italian newspapers give graphic accounts of the scenes witnessed at the polls, where the urns to receive the ballots were often placed in the public squares, and long processions were formed, in many cases headed by the curés of the churches, to march, amid the prayers and cheers of the population, to ex-

press the deliberate and solemn will of the people. In the city of Venice, there were thirty-six thousand five hundred votes cast, only seven of which were in the negative. "Si," the Italian word for *yes*, was paraded everywhere, on banners, placards, personal ornaments, on every thing on which it could be written. In Verona, one of the main fortresses of the famous quadrilateral, there were seventeen thousand votes cast, and only one in the negative. It was inspiring to see a people all on fire with such enthusiasm; and it was a new sight in Italy, where municipal divisions and jealousies have so long been the ruin of the country. A great deal of it must be placed to the account of the personal popularity of the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel. He has impressed everybody with a conviction of his honesty, moderation, justice, and good purposes; and, though he presents no very high type of manhood, in any large sense of that word, he has a plain good-heartedness, coupled with a patient vigor of will, which make him the *galantuomo* whom the people love to honor.

THE details of the entry into Venice of Victor Emmanuel have not yet reached us; but the Italian papers have given full accounts of the preparations made for the great historical event. A sight of the famous *Bucentaur*, in which the old Doges went in state from one part of the city to the other, making its way along the Grand Canal, bearing the king and his court amid the shouts of the people and the roar of cannon and the profuse display of fancy-colored fabrics hanging from the windows of the houses,—one of the invariable and most picturesque signs of public rejoicing in Italy,—doubtless impressed thousands and thousands of beholders, though the description of such scenes not unfrequently raises emotions which the scene itself did not inspire. The design of a beautiful female figure in chains, which drop from her limbs at the first word of the king, is in accordance with Italian taste, which loves the language of symbols.

WHILE we read the above accounts of the public rejoicing of the Venetians, we must not forget that among them is a party who view the events there taking place with very different eyes. The thorough-going papal sect, that hate freedom and public voting and the will of the people, who think there is no safety but in blind obedience to the Romish church, what will they do? If we open some German newspapers, we shall see. The "Augsburg Gazette" says, that the number of monks and nuns quitting

anti-monastic Italy, and seeking a new home in Catholic parts of Germany, is quite alarming. All the convents there are literally overflowing. In many places, new houses are going up as rapidly as possible. Oftentimes these fugitives bring extensive property with them, especially the Jesuits, who have transported a college, with its library and pupils.

THE question is sometimes asked, How is property that is funded for charitable uses cared for and managed as compared with property in private hands? It is not difficult to give a general answer to this question; but some precise statements were made at the late Social Congress at Manchester, Eng., which are quite worthy of note. Sir James P. K. Shuttleworth stated, that Parliament had appointed, within the last forty years, no less than four commissions to investigate the administration of public charities; and that these had brought to light an immense amount of "waste, misuse, neglect, fraud, and mismanagement." No less than three hundred and seventy millions of dollars represent the property devoted to charitable uses in the kingdom; and Sir James said that "no funds are worse administered."

ENGLISH Congregationalism is supposed to have had its origin in 1567, when the first church of this description was established in London. It is proposed to celebrate the third centennial of this event, which will occur next year; and some preparatory steps have already been taken.

SIR John Bowring, whose name is venerated in our churches, where so many of his hymns are used in public devotion, has lately published a second work on the poetry of the Magyars, giving translations from a new and highly popular writer. The Magyar language, understood by few who do not use it, has long been mastered by Sir John Bowring, who counts this as one of the twenty-two languages with which he is familiar.

LITERARY NOTICES.

Massachusetts in the Rebellion; a Record of the Historical Position of the Commonwealth, and the Services of the leading Statesmen, the Military, the Colleges, and the People in the Civil War of 1861-65. By P. C. HEADLEY. Boston: Walker, Fuller, & Co.

This is a large octavo of 688 pages, in elegant style of printing and binding, with engraved likenesses of the leading statesmen and military officers who represented Massachusetts in the late struggle. It has biographical sketches of the Governor, the United-States Senators, and the Members of Congress; a general history of the mustering of the regiments; the names of the officers and chaplains; with some account, necessarily brief, of their marches, campaigns, and principal battles; and with narratives of individual heroism, sacrifice, and martyrdom. It has sketches of the heroic dead, though the list is very incomplete. The work is very fragmentary, by the necessities of the case; but is written in a spirit of the warmest admiration and loyalty, not only towards the Union, but towards the good old Commonwealth, and gives a record which redounds to her honor and glory. s.

Six Months in the White House with Abraham Lincoln. The Story of a Picture. By F. B. CARPENTER. New York: Hurd & Houghton. — This is a very modest book, making no pretensions to literary excellence, and not claiming to be a biography of Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Carpenter was "turned in loose," with the freedom of the White House, while executing his great national painting. He saw and knew Mr. Lincoln in those hours when the character in its minutest shades comes out spontaneously, and he has poured out his treasures of anecdote and reminiscence with undisguised love and admiration of his subject. Though not a biography, no biography could illustrate Mr. Lincoln's traits more minutely and perfectly. The reader keeps on to the end with a never-failing

interest, and with a love of the good President that grows deeper; and closes the book with a sigh over the awful mystery of that Providence that permitted him to be taken from us in our time of sorest need. S.

Martyria; or Andersonville Prison. By AUGUSTUS C. HAMLIN. Late Medical Inspector, United-States Army. Illustrated by the Author. Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1866.

An exhaustive treatment of a very painful subject, — a subject which ought not to be dropped until the facts have been fairly and fully put upon record, and the record approved by those whose offences against humanity no bitterness of strife can excuse. We are glad to notice, that Dr. Hamlin, whose opportunities during his five years' service in the Federal armies of Virginia, of the South, and the South-west, justify him in expressing an opinion, does believe Gen. Lee to be implicated in the Andersonville outrages. He admits that he might have protested against them, although he well knew that the remonstrance would have been without effect. E.

Melibæus-Hipponax. The Biglow Papers, Second Series. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1867.

This is one of our classics. The Yankee is here. The humor does not consist in bad spelling, — the spelling is the correct spelling, let the spelling books say what they please, — and through the mask look very earnest eyes, whilst the voice is that of a very wise and faithful preacher. It is one of those books for the times which will outlive the times. E.

Characteristics of Christ's Teachings drawn from the Sermon on the Mount. By C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D., Vicar of Doncaster. London and New York: Alexander Strahan, Publisher. Messrs. A. Williams & Co., agents for the sale in Boston. 1866.

Simple and direct in style, earnest and faithful in spirit, not dealing with any outward and formal difficulties, but leading the reader by a plain path to the heart of the matter, Dr. Vaughan's book will be of great service to those who would be brought closer to the mind and spirit through which God evermore reconciles the world unto himself. The little book is as comely in outward appearance as it is healthful in its contents. E.

Flower De Luce. By HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW. With Illustrations. Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1867.

A great deal besides *Flower-de-Luce*, sweet little poem as that is, goes to the making-up of this charming volume, which gives us the latest births of the poet's finely cultivated imagination, gathered from their dispersion, to go out no more. E.

Ladies, and Croquet-players of both sexes, will find the *Lady's Almanac* for the year 1867 very useful. It is issued by GEORGE COOLIDGE, and published by Lee & Shepard, 149, Washington Street.

CHILDREN'S BOOKS.

The Young Invincibles, published by Wm. V. Spencer, is a story for boys, full of patriotism, and very well told. A company of boys, at the opening of the war, formed themselves into a corps; and, catching the military spirit, marched and drilled under the instruction of an officer of the war of 1812-15. The book is illustrated with wood-cuts, and abounds in incidents and conversations which illustrate the character and spirit of the young patriots. The boys read it, and are delighted with it. S.

Haste and Waste, or the Young Pilot of Lake Champlain, by OLIVER OPTIC, is another story for young people, published by Lee & Shepard. The narrative is spirited; the interest well kept up; and the moral of the story, which is an important one for Young America to learn, is well brought out at the close. S.

A new Sunday-school Liturgy, designed also for family worship, has been compiled by Rev. O. B. FROTHINGHAM, and published by Walker, Fuller, & Co., under the title of "The Child's Book of Religion." It has more range and variety than any of its class which we have seen; the selections are made with admirable taste, especially in poetry; and they have a freshness which is exceedingly taking. The unreserved and exclusive humanitarianism of the book will spoil it as a manual for public or family use, except to those who are in agreement with the Christology of Mr. Frothingham. Jesus, as the New Testament presents him to us, is more than a saint and a good example. S.

Climbing and Sliding is a child's romance, just published by Nichols & Noyes, written by the author of "Katharine Morris." Clarence, the hero, is a noble boy, who struggled upward through difficulty, sustained by moral principle and a good conscience. The story appeals to the best impulses of a boy's nature, and is a good book for boys to read; and the lessons are excellent ones to be laid to heart. S.

All in readiness for Christmas and the New Year are *Stories of Many Lands*, by that ever-welcome writer for children, GRACE GREENWOOD; and Messrs. Ticknor & Fields are the publishers.

PAMPHLETS.

An Oration delivered at the Dedication of the Soldiers' Monument, in Evergreen Cemetery, Brighton, Mass., on Thursday afternoon, July 26, 1866. By FREDERIC AUGUSTUS WHITNEY. With an Appendix, containing the other Exercises, and Notices of Deceased Soldiers. Boston: S. Chism, Franklin Printing-house.

Our brother has excellent qualifications for the occasion which his address commemorates: a mind enriched with historic studies, and full of poetic imagery; and a heart of quick and tender sympathies and patriotic fervor. All this is shown in the noble tribute here rendered to the fallen brave of his town, and the returned soldiers who gloriously represented her in the late struggle. S.

How New-York City is Governed. By JAMES PARTON. Reprinted from the "North-American Review." Boston: Ticknor & Fields. 1866.

This pamphlet should be scattered broadcast over the land; besides being put into the hands of every tax-payer in the city which has brought such disgrace upon universal suffrage, through the selfishness of its more favored classes. E.

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VOL. XXXVI.—No. 6.

DECEMBER, 1866.

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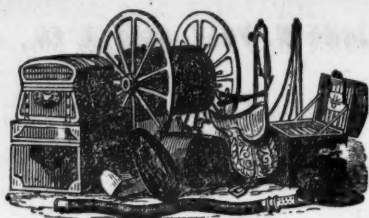
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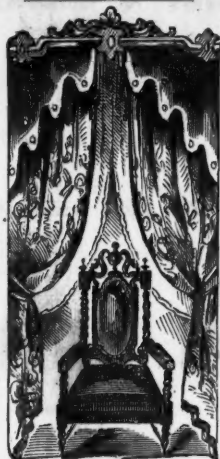
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